MEMOIRS

FOR THE

HISTORY

OF

Madame de MAINTENON

And of the

LAST AGE.

Bonam facile crederes, magnam libenter.

TAC.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH,

BY THE

Author of the FEMALE QUIXOTE.

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THE

MEMOIRS

FOR THE

HISTORY

OF

Madam de *Maintenon*,

AND OF THE

LAST AGE.

BOOK THE EIGHTH.

CHAPTER I.

Father de la Chaiſe.

FATHER de la Chaiſe had directed the king's conſcience for ten years. Father Annat had the care of it before; he was a man of irreproachable manners,

the janſeniſts loaded him with calumny, and yet eſteemed him; he was ſo diſintereſted that he never gave a benefice to any of his relations, and never ſolicited the biſhops for that favour. Father Ferrier ſucceeded him in his poſt, and imitated his predeceſſor in nothing but his zeal againſt the janſeniſts: he had a ſolid underſtanding, and very extenſive views for the publick good, but aſſumed airs of grandeur and power, behaved as if he thought himſelf a ſecretary of ſtate: he cauſed the liſt of benefices to be always given to him, which uſed before to be preſented to the king, by the firſt groom of his chamber: his conduct ſpoiled all his ſucceſſors, and he died without having taken the confeſſion of the prince, whoſe confeſſor he had been for ſeven years. He ſaid to one of his friends, 'I would rather that the 'king had a hundred Vallieres than one 'Monteſpan.'

After his death the king ſuffered his courtiers to determine his choice of a confeſſor; ſeveral were recommended to him, but marſhal Villeroi ſpoke ſo advantageouſly of the piety, the rectitude, and great abilities of Father de la Chaiſe, that the king fixed upon him. This jeſuit had been profeſſor of divinity in the province of Lyons, and rector and provincial of a college there: he was born in Forez, his family

family was noble, but reduced to poverty, he was grand nephew to Father Coton confeſſor to Henry IV. his brothers were equeries to Villeroi archbiſhop of Lyons, the greateſt hunter of his time. He had a noble countenance ſuch as Lewis XIV. was fond of; his air was modeſt, his voice inſinuating, his manners mild, affable and engaging, yet full of a noble frankneſs that diſdained palliation.

He was more deſirous of a good character, than of being in high favour with the king; he miſſed the character he was ſo fond of eſtabliſhing, and acquired the favour he had neglected to cultivate: a faithful ſubject in every diſpute relating to the right of nominating to benefices: he ſerved his maſter with zeal, and left the pope to complain.

He loved wit, had a great ſhare of it himſelf, and always patroniſed it. His influence was very ſmall at his firſt coming to court; time, religion, and the more advanced age of the king gave him more importance; he loved virtue, he purſued it without anxiety, he waited with prudence for favourable moments to inſpire a love of it in the king, and eagerly ſeized the means; during the firſt years, he exerciſed his functions with ſo much vigour and ſteadineſs, that he haſtened the

fall of madame de Monteſpan; and with ſo much wiſdom, that the king eſteemed him greatly, and began to confide in him.

CHAPTER II.

The king marries madame de Maintenon.

IT is probable that father de la Chaiſe repreſented to the king the danger to which his paſſion for madame de Maintenon expoſed him; perhaps his penitent confeſſed to him that he had not yet diſingaged himſelf from women, that he now loved one more than he had loved all the others together, and that if he contracted no actual guilt, yet his deſires were with difficulty reſtrained; a ſin condemned by chriſtianity, which makes us anſwerable for our thoughts as well as our actions.

Whatever paſſed between the confeſſor and his penitent was wrapt up in myſtery; yet it is not to be doubted, but that father de la Chaiſe was as much embaraſſed, as pleaſed with ſuch a diſtinguiſhing confidence. He demanded eight days to conſider

ſider of what the king had imparted to him; no affair was ever more delicate, he was not permitted to have recourſe to the opinions of others upon this occaſion, the ſecret was confided to him. To make the king's paſſion lawful was but a trifle, but how ſhould he reconcile it with his glory? The jeſuit was reſtrained by a thouſand different prejudices; the royal dignity, publick opinion, furniſhed ſtrong ones; even the king's, in ſpite of the ſoft ſophiſtry of love, were difficult to get over. He found it neceſſary to riſe above thoſe conſiderations of decorum, the leaſt of which would have ſtopped a man who had leſs fortitude and leſs wiſdom. To reconcile the dictates of his conſcience with the reſpect he owed the lovers, he propoſed to unite them by the indiſſoluble ties of a ſecret marriage, but performed with all the ceremonies of the church.

The king was charmed with this ſcheme, but either becauſe he was aſhamed to offer his hand without offering his throne at the ſame time, or becauſe he was apprehenſive that he ſhould not be ſufficiently maſter of himſelf not to offer both, he commanded father de la Chaiſe to make the firſt propoſals. Madame de Maintetenon, aſtoniſhed, motionleſs, confuſed, liſtened, interrupted, exclaimed, aſked if it was not a dream, a ſnare, a jeſt,

and made the jeſuit repeat a thouſand times what ſhe could not perſuade herſelf to believe, yet was never tired of hearing.

Joy, gratitude, modeſty, anxiety, curioſity and love, ſhared her divided heart; ſhe ſaw thoſe wiſhes ſhe had ſought to repreſs all granted, thoſe hopes ſhe dared not to indulge fulfilled. She thanked God, the king, father de la Chaiſe; recovering from her tranſport, ſhe replied, that the king might diſpoſe of her deſtiny, that ſhe had no will but his.

Her joy ſubſiding by degrees, ſhe reflected calmly upon the propoſals that had been made her. A private contract! her delicacy was wounded, her virtue was alarmed; who could anſwer for the king's heart? he was candid, ſincere, generous, but ſtill young enough to be inconſtant. The more ſhe examined this affair, the greater were her apprehenſions; ſhe had now charms enough to pleaſe him, graces enough to fix his affection, but that beauty which time had hitherto ſpared, would be totally defaced in a few years, and poſſeſſion would abate his paſſion. Why might he not be diſguſted with her, who had ceaſed to love madame de Monteſpan? Might not private reaſons, intrigues of

ſtate,

ſtate, treacherous counſellors, inventive malice, prevail upon him at length to cancel a marriage, his reaſon condemned. After her death, how might her memory be treated? During her life would not France conſider her as his concubine, the publick know no mean between the miſtreſs, and the wife of the king.

Theſe thoughts were oppoſed by others no leſs powerful. Was it for a ſubject, an attendant upon the dauphineſs, the widow of Scaron, to demand ſecurity of her king? She owed him all, and it was fit ſhe ſhould ſacrifice every thing but virtue to ſo noble a benefactor: he might change, his affections might wander to ſome other woman, it would be her duty to endeavour to fix him, or to recal him. He might poſſibly revenge himſelf on her by a cruel indifference, for the reſolution which love had forced him to take, ſhe muſt then reſolve to ſuffer with patience. If this myſterious marriage had its inconveniences, it had its advantages alſo: it ſecured to her the influence of a miſtreſs, which the title of queen ſeems to deſtroy; it diſpenſed with thoſe diſagreeable ceremonials annexed to that rank, and ſubjected the king to all the pleaſing ſolicitudes of love.

Father de la Chaiſe determined her, by declaring that the king could not live without her; that marriage could alone preſerve him from the fatal conſequences of this paſſion, that his eternal ſalvation depended upon it, and that the care of her reputation ought to yield to a motive ſo powerful: he reaſoned with her upon her ſcruples, and love ſubdued them. Her tenderneſs for Lewis prevailed over all the ſpecious arguments urged by honour and decorum, and formed thoſe ties which rendered the king's paſſion lawful, without exalting the rank of madame de Maintenon, who became greater, but not more elevated.

Lewis ſilenced all her ſcruples, and removed every fear by a thouſand oaths of everlaſting love, and by a promiſe to authenticate this ſecret act. It was upon this promiſe that many perſons believed this act was depoſited in the archives of the apoſtolick chamber, but not the leaſt trace of it was found, either in the papers of pope Innocent XI. in thoſe of Favoriti who managed the affairs of that pontificate, or in the ſecretary of ſtate's office, which a lady of great diſtinction at my earneſt intreaty got permiſſion to have ſearched. Others ſay, that the pope was conſulted concerning the marriage, but this does not ſeem probable: the approbation of Rome

Rome was unneceſſary upon this occaſion: the law which requires that all marriages ſhould be publick, is a civil law, and by which the legiſlator himſelf is not bound.

But it is certain that both parties ſigned an agreement in writing, and I am acquainted with a man, who probably has it in his poſſeſſion.

It cannot be imagined that the firſt article of this contract was, that the marriage ſhould never be diſcloſed; it was love alone that made it, love never impoſes a humiliating condition.

If it were allowable to hazard conjectures where facts are wanting, I would ſay that Lewis who was perhaps deſirous of raiſing madame de Maintenon inſenſibly, waited only for ſome favourable opportunity of declaring her queen; that he was prevented by the wars, in which William the third engaged him, by the duke of Burgundy's marriage, by habit which had formed the firſt delays: probably madame de Maintenon ſhewed no ſolicitude for it, and probably ſhe refuſed it.

It muſt be acknowledged that theſe probabilities are weakened by reflections like theſe. Lewis the fourteenth and madame de Maintenon carried this ſecret with them

to the grave. Is it not therefore apparent, that an inviolable ſecrecy was exacted by one, and promiſed by the other? Is it not to this promiſe that we muſt attribute the king's making no mention of madame de Maintenon in his laſt will, and that extreme ſolicitude madame de Maintenon ſhewed, to deſtroy every thing that could prove the certainty of her marriage? On the other hand, how can it be believed that Lewis ſhould think ſo meanly of madame de Maintenon, as to fear this marriage would hurt his fame; ſo unjuſtly of himſelf, as to ſubmit to a conſtraint, which the loweſt of his ſubjects would have broke through; ſo unfavourably of poſterity, as to believe that the railleries of ſome malevolent contemporaries, would direct its judgment upon this action. Lewis revered madame de Maintenon as much as he loved her, he did not declare his marriage, becauſe he knew that no one doubted of it.

It is related in ſome memoirs of that time, that the king having mentioned this affair to the marquis de Louvois, as what was yet undetermined, and deſired his opinion, the miniſter exclaimed, 'ah! 'Sire, have you well conſidered what you 'ſay to me? Shall the greateſt monarch 'in the world, covered with glory and 'honour, marry the widow of Scaron?'

The

The king telling him with a ſmile that this ardour was unſeaſonable, Louvois threw himſelf at his feet, and with great emotion ſaid, 'Sire, you may deprive me 'of my fortune, my liberty, my life, yet 'I muſt repeat it, your majeſty will diſ-'honour yourſelf by this marriage.'

The king raiſed him, and ſaid he would conſider of it. Sure of the candour of madame de Maintenon he related this converſation to her; ſhe ſhewed no reſentment, and only anſwered, 'I told you, Sire, 'this marriage would be exclaimed a-'gainſt.' Louvois, who was apprehenhenſive that the king would not be ſilent upon what had paſſed, thought he ſaw in the eyes of madame de Maintenon, and in her cold and ceremonious behaviour, that ſhe deeply reſented what in her place, he could not himſelf have pardoned. He uſed his utmoſt endeavours to regain her protection, for which he began to ſuſpect he ſhould have occaſion, and probably it was with this view, that a ſhort time afterwards, he undertook to ſuperintend the works carrying on at Maintenon. However, the miſunderſtanding between Louvois and madame de Maintenon, had an origin more ancient. Louvois was a faithful friend to the marchioneſs de Monteſpan, who declared that he anſwered all her ideas of a great man.

The day was fixed for the ceremony, but madame de Maintenon was ſeized with a ſevere indiſpoſition, which obliged the king to delay it. Lewis ſcarce ever quitted her apartment, and ſerved her with the moſt tender attention during her illneſs. Daquin the phyſician having aſked the patient an imprudent queſtion, received orders never more to appear before the king; however he kept his place, but all the duties of it were performed by Fagon, whom the publick, for more than an age, had known to have greater abilities than Daquin, while the king ſeemed not to have perceived it.

The vigilance of madame de Monteſpan, and the importunities of the dauphineſs, diſconcerted the meaſures they had taken. Father de la Chaiſe regulated every thing ſo as to give hopes that the marriage might remain a profound ſecret.

Here my memoirs have a blank, which may poſſibly be filled up by ſome circumſtances, related by the late monſieur de la Berchere archbiſhop of Narbonne. One day in the winter, ſaid he, Harlay archbiſhop of Paris roſe very early in the morning, and deſired his firſt almoner to prepare him a green veſtment, and mark the maſs-book at the article *de matrimoniis.*

trimoniis. The archbiſhop cauſed the veſtment and the maſs-book to be put into his coach, and went to the caſtle of Verſailles, which he entered with great privacy. Bontems, firſt groom of the chamber to the king, and the marquis de Montchevreuil were witneſſes: the archbiſhop and the confeſſor performed the ceremony in the antient chapel of Verſailles. Montchevreuil congratulating madame de Maintenon, added theſe words, 'It is with infinite pleaſure, ma-'dam, that I find the reſpect I have for 'you cannot be augmented.'

The king went the ſame day to Marly with a ſmall train: there it was that having aſked madame de Maintenon what opera ſhe liked beſt, and madame de Maintenon declaring for Atys, the king replied, *Atys is too happy.*

CHAPTER III.

Teſtimonies of the hiſtorians to this marriage.

LEWIS the fourteenth has already had ſeven hiſtorians. The abbé de Choiſy, the marquis de la Fare, Larrey, Limiers, la Martiniere, Reboulet, and mon-

monſieur de Voltaire ; each of whom has taken notice of this marriage. To have paſſed it over in ſilence, would have been injurious to the memory of that prince, and have left upon him an odious and unjuſt ſuſpicion of having lived in an open and ſcandalous commerce with a woman, whom he had long loved in ſecret, and fixed upon both the eternal reproach, of making a monſtrous union of a pious life, and edifying death with an obſtinate perſeverance in a criminal amour, or what was at leaſt ſuſpected to be ſo. The panegyriſts of Lewis have not praiſed this alliance, neither have his enemies blamed it : they look upon it to be wholly indifferent to his fame. In effect the ſovereign who does an unjuſt thing deſpiſes a law, but the maſter who marries his ſervant deſpiſes only a prejudice.

The accounts of Limiers and Larrey, foreign writers, who were guided by popular reports, merit but little attention ; by one of them madame de Maintenon is repreſented as an ambitious woman, capable of the moſt daring crimes : the other makes her a young beauty, weak enough to grant the king favours, yet artful enough to raiſe herſelf to the throne by them : a ſhocking abſurdity, for tho' a man of honour, through miſtake, may marry

marry the miſtreſs of another, yet what muſt he be who marries his own?

La Fare, the gentleſt and moſt candid of men in converſation, in hiſtory the moſt ſevere, repreſents madame de Maintenon as a coquet, who but half delivered herſelf to the king: who, after the death of mademoiſelle Fontanges, purchaſed an eſtate, that ſhe might have a convenient name, became a devotee becauſe ſhe was grown old, through ambition inſpired the king with ſentiments of piety, which here ſhe affects, and two lines below, ſhe is ſaid to be probably ſincere in, and who perſuaded him to marry her to ſilence the remorſe of his conſcience: he does not fix the date of this event.

The abbé de Choiſy is more exact, he places it in the year 1686, and relates all the circumſtances like one who was well acquainted with the true character of madame de Maintenon: la Martiniere, and Reboulet, have only copied him. Monſieur de Voltaire, although not very exact in his relations, yet ſeems to have wrote this part of his *Siécle* with great care; he has judiciouſly refuted ſome ridiculous tales, either becauſe he was guided by authentic memoirs, or that he made a happy uſe of his extreme diffidence with regard to public reports. No hiſtorian has better deſcribed madame de Main-

Maintenon, or marked with more exactneſs the gradation of her fortune; but he is miſtaken when he ſays * that this marriage was always conſidered as a problem at court; for no one doubted it: that there was no contract: is it probable then that the parties would not have expreſſed their mutual conſent in writing? that madame de Maintenon was in her fifty-ſecond year: ſhe was but forty nine: that the marriage was ſolemnized in the year 1686. From the beginning of that year the king had been greatly diſordered with a fiſtula; it is very unlikely that he ſhould have choſen to marry again, when he was upon the point of going through the moſt dangerous operation imaginable, or that he ſhould think of love, when his life was in the utmoſt danger.

I am therefore of opinion that this marriage was ſolemnized towards the end of the year 1685†, the day and the month cannot be determined, but it is certain, that from that year ſhe ceaſed to perform the office of dame d'Autour. Madamoiſelle d'Aumale relates that marſhal Villeroi

* See Siécle de Louis XIV. Tome 11. premiere partie, édit de Paris, 1752.

† The death of the queen, ſays the marquis de Feuquiere, raiſed her to a height that no one could have expected.

told

told her, the king was married to madame de Maintenon, two years after the death of the queen, which was in 1683. Madame de Maintenon having a little misunderſtanding with the dutcheſs of Burgundy, ſaid to her, 'I was what I am be-'fore you were born.' Now this princeſs was born December the 6th, 1685. To this we may add, that in the collection of her original letters to the abbé Gobelin, not one is to be found of this year's date; it is therefore highly probable that madame de Maintenon deſired to have all thoſe which ſhe had wrote to him upon this great affair returned to her again.

Thoſe who are for fixing this marriage a year farther back, are refuted by the offer that was then made madame de Maintenon of the poſt of lady of honour to the dauphineſs: a huſband would hardly offer his wife the place of a chamber-maid to his daughter-in-law.

Some ſay that the marquis de Louvois and the chevalier de Fourbin were of the number of witneſſes, but the former was upon very ill terms with madame de Maintenon, and the latter not intimate enough with her for ſuch a truſt: beſides in affairs that are to be kept ſecret, confidents are never unneceſſarily multiplied.

The

The act of celebration is not in the archives of the archbiſhop of Paris, where it ought to have been depoſited. Harlay uſed to carry it always in his pocket, and was ſo indolent that whenever he left off his cloaths, he locked them up in a cheſt, to ſpare himſelf the trouble of putting his papers in order. After his death a great number of old clothes were found carefully locked up, and in the pockets of one of them this act, which after having been the jeſt of his valets, paſſed from hand to hand, till it came perhaps into the poſſeſſion of ſome man who thought it deſerved a place in his cabinet, where it may now be.

CHAPTER IV.

Continuation of the ninth chapter.

WHEN the king returned to Verſailles he gave madame de Maintenon an apartment of diſtinction near his own: he found it ſo convenient, that although at firſt he only deſigned ſhe ſhould continue in it a few days, till another more magnificent was prepared for her; yet he now deſired her to ſettle in it. She endeavoured to conceal her ſecret from the aſtoniſhed court, by cauſing it to be

be furniſhed with great ſimplicity. The king ſeeing a large crucifix in one of her rooms, ſaid, 'This is a very grave ornament, I adviſe you to have it taken away.' 'Ah! replied madame de Maintenon, are you afraid of ſeeing the image of him whom you are deſirous of loving? of him who is now your hope, and in death will be all your ſupport?' 'You preach like an angel,' replied the king, and the crucifix was allowed to remain.

This was a very different picture from one with which madame de Monteſpan, during her guilty greatneſs, had adorned a cabinet, which was only open to her choſen friends. The king was there repreſented at the head of his army, turning his head, and gazing attentively and with a paſſionate air upon a woman at a diſtance, who had all the features of madame de Monteſpan, and naked as the graces: this woman lay careleſsly extended upon a bed of flowers, ſighing out theſe tender words, 'Ah! when will Mars reſtore him to me and love?'

The king who had lived in a ſucceſſion of guilty pleaſures, poiſoned by remorſe and interrupted by cares, began to reliſh the calm delights of innocent love: he was charmed with the modeſty of a woman who ſhewed as much ſolicitude to conceal

ceal a lawful union, as others careleſſneſs in hiding a criminal engagement. He was now free from that inquietude, that ſenſe of conſcious guilt, which never quitted madame de Monteſpan, and which filled her with ſuch terrors, that ſhe trembled when ſhe was left alone, though but for a moment; could not ſleep without one of her women on each ſide of her; was in agonies when ſhe heard of any ſudden death; and if it thundered, always held a young girl cloſe to her breaſt, either becauſe ſhe thought the innocence and purity of a child would preſerve her from the danger, or that her weak mind ſuggeſted to her, that heaven might in its rage miſtake, and transfix the child inſtead of her.

It will be eaſily imagined that madame de Maintenon was now more followed than before: the whole court was ſolicitous to pleaſe her, and ſhe obſerved that thoſe who made their court to her, ſeemed to think they were only doing their duty. Such general reſpect conſoled her a little for the ſacrifice of her reputation. She might have taken advantage of this new fervor of adulation, to have exacted thoſe honours that are paid to a queen, but her ſoul was even above royalty: beſides, madame de Monteſpan by uſurping ſome, had debaſed all.

Her

Her old friends congratulated themſelves upon her elevation, which by their anticipated reſpect it ſhould ſeem they had foreſeen. Barillon ſeeing her croſs the gallery of Verſailles, followed by the whole court, ſaid, 'I have been greatly 'to blame.'

In October the court left Verſailles, and went to Fontainebleau. The dutcheſs of Bourbon, the princeſs of Conti, and the duke of Orleans were in the king's coach, but madame de Maintenon was ſeated next his ſide. She was lodged in an apartment cloſe to the king's, who, to the great aſtoniſhment of the courtiers, paſſed part of every night with her.

Madame de Monteſpan came to Fontainebleau with the reſt: ſhe was informed of the new obſervations that had been made: ſhe was told that the king had been ſeen ſtanding at a window with madame de Maintenon, entertaining her with an eaſy familiar air, and expreſſions of the higheſt tenderneſs. 'If they were married, 'ſaid the marchioneſs de Monteſpan, they 'would not be ſo fond of each other, yet 'it is ſtrange they ſhould allow themſelves ſuch liberties.'

The known virtue of the one excluded all probability of an amour, the haughtineſs

neſs of the other made ſuch an alliance be thought impoſſible. Madame de Monteſpan explained away facts which might have convinced her of the truth: ſhe had ſtill ſome diſtinction paid her, and at the intreaty of madame de Maintenon ſome evenings were ſpent in her apartment: no one could fall more imperceptibly.

The king was very deſirous that his court ſhould ſuſpect he had married madame de Maintenon, but was not willing to give certain proofs of it. He imagined that the appearance of myſtery would excuſe the prodigious diſproportion of ſuch a match, and that virtue would juſtify it. He acted like a prince, whom certain circumſtances did not permit to own, and whom conſcience forbid to conceal all. The court had a thouſand indications of his marriage. Madame de Maintenon, when ſhe went to maſs, always ſat in one of the little galleries deſtined for the king and queen: ſhe dreſt and undreſt before the king, who called her Madame, pronounced ſhort, to diſtinguiſh her from the dutcheſs of Orleans his brother's wife. She went one day to the convent of the grand Carmelites, which the queens of France are only permitted to enter: the ſuperior met her, and ſaid. 'You know our cuſtoms 'madam, it is for you to decide.' Mo-

'ther,

'ther, replied madame de Maintenon, you 'may always admit me.'

It has been ſaid, but with no probability, that the ſmall number of domeſticks who were in the ſecret paid her in private thoſe honours, which ſhe did not receive in publick, and even gave her the title of majeſty. The abbé de Choiſy, in thoſe memoirs which are accuſed of containing ſo many falſhoods, and which have ſo candid an air, relates a little incident, which ſays he, at leaſt forms a preſumption. He had dedicated a book to the king, and intreated Bontems to preſent a copy in his name to madame de Maintenon. Bontems, when he gave him an account of what he ſaid to the lady, made uſe of theſe words, *I am perſuaded that her ma . . . . . .* he ſtopped ſhort, bluſhed for his indiſcretion, and changed the diſcourſe: I pretended, adds the abbé de Choiſy, that I did not hear theſe words, and never took any notice of them to him.

The ſame abbé having dedicated to her his verſion of the imitation of Jeſus Chriſt, in the frontiſpiece to the book was a woman reſembling madame de Maintenon on her knees before a crucifix, with theſe words of the pſalmiſt * beneath:

* This frontiſpiece was not fixed to the ſecond edition.

Audi

Audi, filia mea: & inclina aurem tuam: & obliviſcere domum patris tui: rex concupiſcet decorem tuum. Liſten, oh daughter! and incline thine ear: forget thy father's houſe, for the king ſhall deſire thy beauty.

Lewis gave madame de Maintenon neither rank nor title, becauſe there were none which were not beneath her ſtate. If ſhe had aſpired to the throne, ſhe would have been raiſed to it by degrees, ſhe would have taken the title of ſome principality or dutchy, ſhe would have lived with ſplendor ſuitable to the dignity of her character, but nothing could be more ſimple, more free from oſtentation than her houſe. Our financiers would ſmile if I ſhould tell them that the wife of Lewis XIV. had only a ſteward, a Butler, a cook, three foot-men, two women, a coachman, a ſuit of tapeſtry hangings from the wardrobe of Verſailles, and a ſervice of plate of fifteen thouſand francks price.

She who had a right to take way of every lady in the court, yielded it to all without exception: the foreign miniſters in vain beſieged her door, and ſolicited an audience of her after the royal family, the pope's nuncios, and afterwards the Spaniſh ambaſſadors, were alone able to prevail over her humility. She

preſerved

preſerved her favour by the ſame kind of merit, by which ſhe had acquired it, and the equality of her conduct, in ſituations ſo different, proved the ſincerity of her virtue. How ſhould ſhe aſpire to the throne of France, who had refuſed to accept the poſt of lady of honour to a dauphineſs, becauſe ſhe thought it above her? Now when ſhe had reached a height which even her wiſhes durſt not graſp at, ſhe behaved as if it was ſtill unattained; however on ſome occaſions when the king's orders, an abſolute neceſſity, or probably a juſt reſentment, obliged her to it, ſhe made the princeſſes of the blood ſenſible of the dignity of her character: ſhe was often informed of their ralleries, by perſons whoſe trade it is to hear, to repeat, and to exaggerate all. The dutcheſs of Bourbon, lively, witty, good, but ſatirical and capricious, made a very ſevere couplet againſt her: madame de Maintenon after reading it, ſaid, 'Do they take me for 'the king's miſtreſs?'

She never diſcovered her ſecret, yet never denied her quality. One of her friends ſaying to her, 'You, madam, 'are not the laſt in the kingdom. Be 'ſilent, ſhe replied, all this is vanity. 'A little girl ſaying I have been aſſured, 'madam, that you are queen. Who has 'told you ſo?' was all the anſwer of

madame de Maintenon: another going with her into her coach, cried out, 'I 'have the honours (one of the honours of the court is the right of ſitting in the coach of the king or queen.') Madadame de Maintenon ſmiled, and laid her fan upon the child's mouth. When any of the country people near Fontainbleau uſed to addreſs her with the title of majeſty, ſhe bluſhed, ſaying, 'Muſt I be flattered 'then by every one?'

On her birth-day, a wit of thoſe times preſented her with a ſonnet preceded by this anagram, *queen of France in* 168... which the poet pretended to make out from theſe two words *Françoiſe d'Aubigné:* this little piece I have ſeen among her papers.

She puniſhed madame d'Heudicourt ſeverely for imprudently ſaying to her, 'Our huſbands will not return ſoon from 'hunting.' The babler was excluded ſome months from her ſociety. The too great caution of marſhal de N.... has deprived us of a very intereſting relation. Madame de Maintenon, who eſteemed him greatly for his virtues, was upon the point of telling him her whole ſecret. The marſhal was afraid of ſuch a truſt: he knew her weakneſs of telling every thing to the king, either through habitual ingenuouſneſs,

nuouſneſs, or to vary the converſation: he was afraid that the king would be diſpleaſed that he knew it, and oppoſed an exceſs of circumſpection to an exceſs of confidence. 'If I had been willing, ſaid 'he to a lady as he came away, I might 'have known all. *

Madame de Caylus has often told mademoiſelle d'Aumale, and probably mentioned likewiſe in her memoirs the following circumſtance. Madame de Maintenon who was exceſſively fond of her, yet chid her inceſſantly, cloſed a ſevere lecture one day with theſe words: *You who may make the greateſt figure in court: you to whom I transfer with pleaſure the homage that fatigues me.* And obſerving her unmoved with all this, ſhe added with great emotion, yet lowering her voice, *You who are neice to a queen.* This anecdote has been rejected by ſome, as being directly oppoſite to her character. But it would be much more ſurpriſing if in the courſe of ſo long a life no inadvertent expreſſion had betrayed her ſecret, than that ſuch a one really eſcaped her.

The king was leſs reſerved. One day when he had taken ſome medicines, the duke of Orleans came to ſee him, and

* Manuſcripts of mademoiſelle d'Aumale.

found him in bed negligently covered, and madame de Maintenon in the chamber. The king vexed that he ſhould be ſurpriſed in that ſtate, without anſwering his brother's enquiries concerning his health, ſaid precipitately, 'By the manner in 'which you ſee me with madame, you 'may gueſs what ſhe is to me.' To reveal a ſecret to the duke of Orleans, was to declare it publicly.

The dauphineſs claimed the right of receiving a foreign queen in a chair of ſtate, 'I am not yet queen of France, ſaid ſhe, 'but I hold the place of queen.' The king hearing of this claim, replied, 'Not 'yet, not yet.'

Mignard being employed to draw a picture of madame de Maintenon, painted her in the character of Saint Francis, and aſked the king with a ſmile, if he might not give her a mantle of ermine, 'Yes, ſaid the king, Saint Francis de-'ſerves it.'

This picture is the moſt beautiful of all that was ever done for her. Mignard has made it lovely without flattery: he has given her neither youth, nor bloom, yet without theſe perfections, ſays madame de Coulanges to madame de Sevigné, he ſhews us eyes ſo animated, ſuch perfect grace,

grace, ſuch dignified ſweetneſs, ſuch power of expreſſion in her charming countenance, as exceeds all that the moſt lively imagination could form. All the courtiers admired this picture, nor did the attribute of royalty eſcape their obſervation. It was upon this picture, and one that Mignard drew of the king, that mademoiſelle Bernard addreſſed the following verſes to Mignard.

Oui, votre art, je l'avoue, eſt au-deſſus du mien.
J'ai loué mille fois notre invincible maître:
Mais vous, en deux portraits, vous le faites connoître.

On voit aiſément dans le ſien
Sa valeur, ſon cœur magnanime.
Dans l'autre on voit ſon gout à placer ſon eſtime.
Ah! Mignard! *que vous louez bien!*

'Your art ſurpaſſes mine, I own.
'I've oft our matchleſs maſter prais'd;
'But in two portraits you have ſhewn,
'What ne'er my nobleſt numbers rais'd.

'His valour *that* and mighty mind,
'To each enraptur'd eye diſplays;

‘ His taſte *this* and eſteem refin’d,
‘ How delicate thy pencil’s praiſe.

ELPHINSTON.

Although a thouſand little circumſtances which ſeparately proved nothing, but taken together explained all, had not informed the court that Lewis and madame de Maintenon were united by the moſt ſacred ties: yet it could not have been doubted, when on one hand was conſidered their piety, their extenſive charity, their conſtant practice of all the duties of religion, their averſion to the corrupters of men and the ſeducers of women; and on the other, the extreme familiarity between them, madame de Maintenon’s door, ſhut to all the world after the king had entered. The tender attention of Lewis when ſhe was ill, compliances on her ſide paid with reſpect, and veneration on his, that undiſguiſed pleaſure at ſeeing each other after every ſhort abſence, that fondneſs for being together, and all that may be obſerved in perſons whoſe tenderneſs is founded on virtue.

CHAP-

CHAPTER V.

The different opinions of the public concerning this marriage.

THE public judged differently of this marriage. The princes murmured, the wiſe praiſed the king, the women blamed him, and the politicians admired madame de Maintenon.

The great Arnauld, who had ſo many reaſons to complain of Father de la Chaiſe, but many more to ſpeak truth, was probably the only perſon who thought juſtly of the affair. 'Thoſe, ſays he, who di-'rect the king's conſcience, cannot be 'reproached with having acted wrong 'upon this occaſion. There is no ſcandal 'given to the public, ſince all who ob-'ſerve that there is ſomething more 'than friendſhip between the king and 'madame de Maintenon, believe that 'they are married. If the confeſſor was 'perſuaded that he could not live with-'out a woman, was it not his duty to ad-'viſe him to enter into a lawful engage-'ment, rather than to offend God by cri-'minal amours? I cannot therefore ſee any 'thing to be condemned in this marriage,

'contracted according to the rules of the 'church: it is only humiliating in the 'opinions of weak and prejudiced perſons, 'who conſider it as an effect of mean-'neſs to marry a woman older than him-'ſelf, and ſo greatly beneath his rank; 'yet in reality he did an action agreeable 'to God, if he looked upon this union as 'the means of avoiding unlawful paſſions. 'By this marriage he acquired a right 'to the affections of a woman whoſe 'underſtanding and virtue he eſteemed, 'and in whoſe converſation he finds in-'nocent pleaſures, which relieve him af-'ter the fatigue of great affairs. Would 'to God that the directors of his con-'ſcience had never given him any worſe 'advice *.'

This marriage was neither diſgraceful nor ridiculous; the diſproportion of their ages was not ſo great: madame de Maintenon was but three years older than the king. Pleaſure had advanced the age of the king, virtue had preſerved the youth of madame de Maintenon. Hiſtory affords us inſtances of a hundred paſſions more ſurpriſing, if at preſent any thing would give ſurpriſe. Cleopatra was old when ſhe enſlaved Antony: Henry the ſecond languiſhed for his father's miſtreſs,

* Letter to monſieur du Vaucel, June 3d, 1688.

and

and preferred the wrinkles of the dutcheſs de Valentinois, to the roſes and lilies of the moſt lovely princeſs in the world. 'If I was young, ſaid a coquet to a prince, 'you ſhould ſee me at your feet; I am 'old, and you muſt now kneel to me.'

If coquetry has its arts, and wiſdom its addreſs, one has the talent of pleaſing, the other has the power of charming. By that madame de Maintenon fixed the moſt ſenſual and moſt inconſtant prince in the world: after his marriage no other woman ever attracted his eyes, or raiſed a wandering deſire; and that heart ſo volatile, ſo often attacked, never gave the leaſt cauſe of ſuſpicion to the moſt jealous wife in the world. Madame de Maintenon had doubtleſs charms enough at forty-nine, to awake a paſſion in a libertine, ſince at ſeventy ſhe ſtill inſpired deſires. Lewis had reaſon to apprehend that long repentance would ſucceed the ſhort tranſports of ſuch an union; but ſhe was always attractive, he was always paſſionate. In 1705 we ſee her ſolicited by the king, aſhamed of being ſo, and yielding to his wiſhes, at the command of her biſhop. At an age when paſſion dies in us, the graces ſtill live: continence was in her a virtue. She ſaw herſelf conſuming in a gradual decay, yet ſtill beheld with paſſionate deſire, and when reduced

almoſt to a ſhadow, ſtill lovely and ſtill adored. I ſhall ſuppreſs details unworthy of the dignity of hiſtory. But be this marriage no more thought ſurpriſing; who better than the lover knows whom he ought to love?

A prince ſhould not be reſtrained by inequality of rank, who accuſtomed to think every thing depending on himſelf, ſees nor acknowledges no grandeur but what proceeds from him: love and virtue reduce all to an equality, and fill up the immenſe ſpace between the maſter and the ſlave. When a woman is beloved by her king, deſerves to be ſo, and is too good to be his miſtreſs, the quality of ſubject makes her only more worthy to be his wife.

Madame de Maintenon's ſurpriſing elevation is ſtill exclaimed againſt by us, as if there had not been more wonderful changes of fortune. The annals of the world are full of them. Charlemaign had two wives, neither of whom were deſcended more nobly than Frances d'Aubigné, and who were not declared empreſſes. Louiſa of Savoy, mother of Francis the firſt, married Rabaudange *, her

* This family is ſtill ſubſiſting in Normandy; and if we may believe Brantôme, diſc. IV. art. III. of the love

her maître-d'hôtel, who was her ſervant in the day, at night her tyrant. Mary Stuart did not bluſh to become the wife of a nobleman, after having been queen of France; and Henry the eighth was not blamed for marrying Anne Bullen, but for beheading her. Without looking ſo far back, the age of Lewis the fourteenth affords us inſtances of marriages which juſtify his. In Denmark, Chriſtiern the fourth publicly married Chriſtiana Monck, whom he created dutcheſs of Holſtein; and Frederick the fourth married mademoiſelle de Revénclau, and declared her queen, although he had two children by her before his marriage. In England, the marriage of the duke of York brother to Charles the ſecond with the daughter of chancelor Hyde, occaſioned no aſtoniſhment. In Piedmont, Victor-Amadeus did not diſdain to give his hand to the marchioneſs de Sebaſtian. In Ruſſia, Peter the firſt, after raiſing Catharine to the throne, who was the daughter of a prieſt, and the widow of a drummer, bequeathed her the empire at his death. Peter the great, and Lewis the great, married their ſubjects, becauſe they ſaw none more worthy of them. But the Ruſſian acted like a Frenchman, and the Frenchman like a Ruſſian.

love of widows, the preſent race of Rabaudange are deſcended from this marriage.

The former deſpiſed the weak prejudices of mankind, and nobly owned his choice; the latter enſlaved by ridiculous cuſtom, and falſe decorum, dared not to avow his. In this inſtance, Peter the firſt ſeems as greatly ſuperior to Lewis the fourteenth, as madame de Maintenon to the empreſs Catharine.

The nations of Europe give ſovereigns reciprocally to each other, theſe very ſeldom acquire the love of the people they govern, becauſe they cannot adopt their manners. Such alliances in former times united princes in the ſtricteſt friendſhip: at preſent they form ties which are eaſily broken: conſanguinity ends where the diverſity of intereſts begins. Why then ſhould monarchs ſeek in foreign countries what they ſo rarely find, and what their own can furniſh them with? Ever ſince Europe has been divided into catholic and proteſtant ſtates, they have been deprived of the liberty of choice, and have been obliged to receive a wife from the hands of chance: old, ugly, fooliſh, or wicked, thoſe whom they cannot love, they are tied to for life. Hence ſo few happy marriages, hence ſuch degenerate races. Among ſo many ſubjects diſtinguiſhed for their birth, their beauty, and wit, they might find wives worthy of their affection. It is eaſy to be happy, it is difficult

ficult to dare to be ſo. Lewis the fourteenth did not heſitate long; inſtead of a foreign princeſs, whom he muſt ſtudy to pleaſe, he choſe a woman in his own kingdom, who made it her whole endeavour to pleaſe him, the only one who could inſpire him with a laſting paſſion, and ſo revered, that in the admiration which the recital of her virtues occaſioned, he cried, *let us go and ſhut ourſelves up, to talk of this woman.*

CHAPTER VI.

Operation of the fiſtula. The marchioneſs de Monteſpan leaves the court.

MADAME de Maintenon diſcovered none of that triumph, that conſcious ſatisfaction which is impreſt on the countenance of a declared favourite. And how indeed ſhould ſhe, ſince a few days familiarized her to her good fortune, and made it taſteleſs? This ſhe owned herſelf, in the ardour of confidence, to one of her friends, 'I was born ambitious, 'ſays ſhe: I ſtruggled againſt this pre-'vailing paſſion: when my higheſt wiſhes 'were granted, I thought myſelf ſupreme-1686.

ly

'ly happy, but this intoxication laſted 'only three weeks.'

Her peculiar turn of mind rendered her incapable of happineſs. She had ſo lively a ſenſe of all the inconveniences of her ſtation, that ſhe deſpiſed the advantages of it, and to compleat her miſery, ſhe ſaw that this ſtation which prudence had made myſterious, might ſoon become uncertain by the death of the king. That prince ſeemed to enjoy a perfect health, he walked in his gardens, he affected his uſual gaiety, yet he languiſhed with a painful diſorder; he had for ſome time been afflicted with a fiſtula, and the remedies preſcribed by his phyſicians, rather aſſuageing the pain than making any progreſs towards a cure, the diſtemper grew violent, and he was no longer able to mount his horſe without great pain, to or continue ſitting for any conſiderable time. Having reſolved to try the baths of Barege, and to begin his journey towards Whitſuntide: he named the perſons who were to be with him in his coach, and theſe were the Dauphin, the duke of Orleans, the dutcheſs of Bourbon, the princeſs of Conti, and madame de Maintenon. At the ſame time he gave notice to the marchioneſs de Monteſpan that ſhe muſt not expect to attend him to Barege. This news gave her dreadful vapours, how ſhould ſhe ſupport

port ſo open a preference of a perſon ſhe ſtill thought beneath her, and whom the king had raiſed ſo greatly above her?

Her rage no longer knew any bounds, when ſhe heard her ſentence from a mouth that was now become odious to her. Madame de Maintenon was ordered by the king to ſignify to her in expreſs terms, that he was determined to break off all connexion with her, and would confine her to Paris, if ſhe continued to importune him with her ridiculous claims.

This was a dreadful meſſage: madame de Maintenon was the only perſon who would have been willing to deliver it; but ſhe had no reaſon to fear the reproaches of a woman, whoſe conduct had been ſo different from hers. Secure of ſupporting her rights with the ſame calm ſteadineſs with which ſhe had maintained thoſe of virtue, ſhe flattered herſelf that ſhe ſhould pronounce with more ſoftneſs than any other a decree ſo favourable to her, ſo cruel to the unhappy marchioneſs de Monteſpan; but in vain ſhe ſpoke to her in the gentleſt manner, with apparent diſintereſtedneſs and ſoothing compaſſion: madame de Monteſpan was wild with rage and grief, 'Ah! 'cried ſhe, if I could have believed this,

'four-

'fourteen years ago, you ſhould not 'have had it in your power to torment 'me thus to-day.'

In the exceſs of her deſpair ſhe demanded her children, that ſhe might tear them in pieces; then flew to the community of ſaint Joſeph, to give free vent to her ſorrow. She afterwards ſent for madame de Miramion, the moſt famous devotee of the age, eager to prove if a converſation wholly divine could make her forget the moſt lovely of mortals. 'Alas! 'madam, ſaid ſhe, embracing her, he 'treats me like the moſt abandoned of 'creatures, and yet heaven is my witneſs, ſince the birth of the count de 'Toulouſe, he has never received the 'leaſt favour from me.'

The devotee croſſed herſelf three or four times, to expiate this confidence, and preached a long ſermon to the afflicted miſtreſs, to ſhew her the favourable deſigns of a ſanctifying God, in the cruelties of a faithleſs lover.

The next day, without taking leave of the king or of any other perſon, ſhe ſet out for Rambouillet. The king permitted mademoiſelle de Blois to follow her, but expreſly forbid the count de Toulouſe. However, a few days after, finding himſelf

himſelf much better, and even able to purſue his favourite diverſion hunting, he declared he would not go to Barege, and had the goodneſs or the weakneſs to ſend for madame de Monteſpan, who came inſtantly back to Verſailles, tranſported with joy; received the compliments of the court upon her return, and attributed to reviving love what was only the effect of compaſſion. She now entertained hopes of regaining a heart which had once glowed with the moſt ardent paſſion for her, and which ſtill retained ſo tender a reſpect for her: but her influence daily leſſening for ſo long a time, all was languor and indifference on one ſide, and on the other pining diſcontent, and ſudden ſallies of rage. Although madame de Maintenon had not poſſeſſed the firſt place, madame de Monteſpan would never have recovered hers.

As ſoon as ſhe arrived at Verſailles, the king went to her apartment and continued to viſit her in his way to maſs; but he ſtaid only a moment with her, and was always followed by his attendants, leſt the world ſhould ſuſpect that he was going to reſume thoſe chains which had ſo long been broke.

Madame de Maintenon ſeldom ſaw her. The marchioneſs would always inſiſt

ſiſt upon coming to an explanation upon every imagined miſtake. She once, after a very ſpirited converſation, ſaid to her, 'I know how to revenge myſelf.' And 'I, replied madame de Maintenon, know 'how to pardon you.'

The marchioneſs often propoſed to madame de Maintenon a party to Clagny, and ſhe always accepted it. One day when they had reſolved to go together, madame de Maintenon was adviſed to break the appointment. 'You are not ſafe there ſaid 'this officious friend, this entertainment 'that is prepared for you may cover 'ſome treachery, madame de Monteſpan's 'friendſhip ſeems too violent to be ſincere, 'and if it is diſſembled, it is dangerous.' Madame de Maintenon had promiſed, and was reſolved to keep her word: ſhe went, and was convinced, that it was eaſier to imagine a crime than to execute it.

The marchioneſs excluded from love, from power, from pleaſure, devoured by ambition, tormented with jealouſy, ſent back to the king all the jewels he had preſented her with. The king made a motion to open the caſket but was prevented by madame de Maintenon, who was afraid of being affronted with the offer of them. He ſeemed reſolved to puniſh her for the inſult, but madame de Maintenon repreſented

ſented to him, that the marchioneſs was more worthy of compaſſion than reſentment, and that this imprudent ſally of rage was the laſt effort of a paſſion reduced to deſpair. Superior to all that could be ſaid of her, conſcious of all that madame de Monteſpan could think, ſhe would have been rejoiced that Lewis had baniſhed her from the court, to which ſhe ſtill gave ſcandal, but ſhe was not willing that what ought to be the work of repentance and returning virtue, ſhould be the effect of diſguſt and reſentment.

Mean time experiments were made in ſecret in an operation to which the king was determined to ſubmit. Several perſons labouring under the ſame diſeaſe were carried to the Marquis de Louvois's hôtel, upon whom Felix the king's firſt ſurgeon exerciſed his hand in the preſence of Fagon his phyſician. Moſt of the unhappy creatures died, they were interred with great ſecreſy; but notwithſtanding all the precautions that were uſed, dead bodies were frequently ſeen brought out of the hôtel de Louvois. Suddenly a report was ſpread over the whole city, that a conſpiracy againſt the king had been diſcovered, that the miniſter interrogated the criminals, and put them to death, either by poiſon or the torture. Terror and amazement filled the minds of the people, each trembling

bling leſt he ſhould be ſeized, and carried before the ſtern Louvois, aſked himſelf, if he was innocent, if he had no connexion with any criminal. No one approached the miniſter without terror, or ventured to ſpeak of ſtate affairs, each feared an informer in his moſt faithful friend.

Theſe unfortunate experiments were concealed from the king, but Fagon could not help acquainting madame de Maintenon, who fluctuated between the fear of killing the king by the operation if ſhe did not inform him, and by the diſeaſe if ſhe did. Whenever ſhe heard of any fatal experiment, her heart ſunk with terror; her imagination continually repreſented to her the king expiring before her eyes in the arms of his phyſicians, ere half his race was finiſhed, and at the moment when his life was moſt neceſſary, and was likely to be moſt glorious.

Tortured with theſe mournful images, ſhe received with indignation a dominican, who earneſtly intreated her to procure him a moment's audience of the king. Nothing dulls the apprehenſion ſo much as fear and anxiety, ſhe inſtantly recollected brother Clement: this monk was an emperick who pretended to have diſcovered a ſpecifick againſt Fiſtulas. This was an injection

injection of water, which was found to be only prepared vitriol.

Felix invented new inſtruments, and at laſt made ſome ſucceſsful experiments in the hoſpital of invalids. The king upon the report of Louvois, and the advice of Fagon, told the firſt ſurgeon, that he would abandon himſelf wholly to his ſkill.

On the day fixed for the operation, the firſt phyſician, the firſt ſurgeon, Father de la Chaiſe, Louvois, and madame de Maintenon, came with great ſecreſy into the king's apartment; ſadneſs and fear were impreſſed on every countenance. The king alone with a calm and ſerene air ſaid to Felix, 'Make as many inciſions 'as you ſhall judge neceſſary, but finiſh 'the operation at once.' Felix now ready to lay his hands upon his prince, repreſented to himſelf the ſeveral accidents that might happen, the cry that would be raiſed againſt him if the king ſhould die, the bitter regret he ſhould feel for it to the end of his life; and his blood froze in his veins. Fagon gave him a look that reaſſured him. The confeſſor raiſed his eyes to heaven. Louvois reflecting on all the conſequences of this dangerous ſecret remained immoveable at the bed-ſide. Already he thought that France and the dauphin demanded of him the king and the

the father, and made him accountable for his life. Madame de Maintenon in agonizing terrors felt herſelf pierced with every ſtroke given to the king. All trembled, yet all concealed their fears, leſt they ſhould alarm the patient, who with his eyes demanded of the faithful Bontems, if there was any danger.

Felix made an effort upon himſelf, and reſuming all his courage, cut with a pityleſs yet friendly hand, to the laſt roots of the diſeaſe. All who were preſent groaned; madame de Maintenon uttered a loud cry; the king ſtruggled againſt pain, and ſuffered not a ſigh to eſcape him.

At eight o'clock in the mornig the doors were opened: the whole court was informed that a great operation had been performed on the king, and no perſon yet knew what it was. The dauphin flew with eager haſte to the king's apartment, he entered bathed in tears, threw himſelf proſtrate at the feet of the bed, ſaw madame de Maintenon at the head, and thanked her for having preſerved his father.

At this unexpected news the marchioneſs de Monteſpan came in great haſte to the king's apartment: the door-keeper who had his orders, told her ſhe muſt not enter: madame de Monteſpan with that imperious

perious air, which long domination always leaves, insisted upon being admitted: the door-keeper as resolutely refused. She learned that madame de Maintenon was with the king, and retiring precipitately, filled the antichamber with tears and groans, which neither proved, or deceived any who were present.

The same day Lewis gave audience to the Ambassadors, and held a council with his ministers: the man suffered, but the king was well.

Felix was magnificently rewarded, but his imagination had been so forcibly struck with the king's danger, he had made so violent an effort upon himself, that he was seized with a tremor which never quitted him during the rest of his life: the day after he had saved the king, he maimed his most valuable friend * in bleeding him.

Madame de Maintenon continued a month longer, in the most dreadful anxiety: the wound was opened, new incisions were made, the physicians varied in their opinions and advice, and even the gentlest was cruel. 'Sire, said she, one day

* The sieur de Niert first groom of the chamber. *Manuscripts of the bishop of Agen.*

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'to the king, you have ſuffered a great 'deal. Yes, replied the king, in ſeeing 'you ſuffer.' During the courſe of his illneſs he ſaw ſo much real tenderneſs in her, ſuch extreme attention in ſerving him, that he no longer doubted his having found a woman who was more attached to his perſon than his grandeur.

When he was a little recovered, he languiſhed for ſome amuſement; he uſed to ſpend an hour every afternoon in examining his cabinet of medals with father de la Chaiſe, who underſtood them perfectly, and who had no reaſon to repent his explanations of them: madame de Maintenon obſerving the king meditating upon an Auguſtus Cæſar, ſaid to him, 'You look too long upon yourſelf.'

Racine and Boileau were ſent for to read to the king ſome parts of his hiſtory. They were extremely ſurpriſed to ſee madame de Maintenon, who they ſuppoſed was diſmiſſed, ſeated in a chair of ſtate, cloſe by the bed of the king, who talked to her familiarly, while ſhe anſwered with an eaſy air, like a perſon who was at home. To ſooth madame de Monteſpan, to deceive her, or to flatter her pride, the king admitted her to theſe aſſemblies, it was her who had ſuggeſted to him the deſign of having his hiſtory wrote by Racine and

and Boileau, who ſhewed greater application to ſeclude other men of letters from the court, and to make themſelves maſters of the academy, than to produce a work worthy of poſterity: for what muſt that hiſtory be, that could be read to him who was the ſubject of it? While Racine read, and Lewis enjoyed while living the fame he would have after death, madame de Monteſpan threw out ſome ſatirical expreſſions. The king ſmiled at them, and ſlily looked upon madame de Maintenon, who ſeated on a ſtool oppoſite to him, endeavoured to liſten without yawning to the flatteries of the two hiſtorians.

Boileau has related to his friends, that one day when he had juſt began to read to the king, the marchioneſs de Monteſpan who was not expected, came in; madame de Maintenon did not riſe at her entrance, but the king deſired the marchioneſs to ſit down, adding, 'It is but juſt, madam, 'that you ſhould hear a work, the plan 'of which was traced by yourſelf.' Madame de Monteſpan appeared very inattentive, and interrupted the reader frequently, to ſay to madame de Maintenon, 'Does this paſſage pleaſe you, madam?' When the reading was over, ſhe courteſied profoundly low to madame de Maintenon, with an air more ſatirical than reſpectful, and deſired ſhe would give her an opportu-

nity to ſpeak to her in private, having a great many things to ſay to her. 'I have 'buſineſs at preſent, replied madame de 'Maintenon coolly when I am at leiſure 'I will let you know.' This was the only time ſhe ever made madame de Monteſpan ſenſible of her ſuperiority, who had ſo often overwhelmed her with hers. She no otherwiſe repaid her inſults than by inattention, by kindneſs, or diſdain.

She was ſo ſure of the king's affection, that ſhe was not afraid to let him ſee daily a woman once paſſionately beloved by him, and ſtill lovely. Any other would have required the baniſhment of the marchioneſs, but madame de Maintenon ſatisfied with having put Lewis in a ſtate not to fear her, did not even think the preſence of her enemy troubleſome. *By engaging him to think of eternity, ſhe had acquired an aſcendant ſo much the ſtronger, as human intereſts had no part in it.* This teſtimony to her honour is given by the abbé de Choiſy, who makes her eulogium a thouſand times in thoſe very memoirs which are accuſed of being ſo ſevere.

She left to Hebert rector of Verſailles and to father de la Chaiſe the care of deciding, whether madame de Monteſpan ought to be baniſhed from court, or allowed to remain there ſtill. Hebert, a trouble-

troubleſome devotee, a rigid prieſt, an imprudent courtier, a ſpy upon all his friends, could not without deep regret ſee madame de Monteſpan in his pariſh. Father de la Chaiſe, who had as much rectitude and more moderation, was of opinion, that ſince the crime had ceaſed, nothing more was to be feared. The rector either ſtimulated by zeal, or becauſe he flattered himſelf he ſhould pleaſe madame de Maintenon, told her, that in the provinces, and in Paris itſelf, there were many perſons, who could not be perſuaded that this ſcandalous commerce was broke, while madame de Monteſpan was ſeen at court. He repreſented to her, that the king was in danger while the object of a guilty paſſion was always before his eyes, that hearts however fortified with pious reſolutions, yet may yield to the ſnares which the remembrance of paſt pleaſures lays for them. 'I am perſuaded of the 'reaſonableneſs of all you have ſaid, replied 'madame de Maintenon, and I doubt 'not but the king will be eaſily brought 'to think as I do, but father de la Chaiſe 'is of another opinion.'

The rector replied, that the confeſſors of private perſons obliged them to ſeparate from the women with whom they had ſinned, that this was the arm which muſt be cut off, this the eye that muſt be pul-

led out; and that the conſciences of kings were regulated by the ſame rules as thoſe of their ſubjects. Theſe reaſons were equally ſtrong for baniſhing the children as well as the mother. 'I am convinced, 'replied madame de Maintenon, that all 'you have ſaid is juſt, and I ſincerely 'wiſh matters were ordered otherwiſe.'

Her wiſhes were ſoon granted, madame de Monteſpan no longer appeared at court. After having had the moſt extenſive influence, after having acted the part of a prude, a coquet, a devotee, ſhe reduced herſelf to nothing, when all the ties that held her to the court were broken. She had ſuffered ſome mortifications: but why was ſhe not a more affectionate mother? ſhe would have thought them all compenſated by the immenſe fortunes that were given to her children, and the illuſtrious rank they were in at court.

Her baniſhment did not embroil madame de Maintenon with the family of Mortemar. The abbeſs of Fontevrault, who knew all her proceedings, might hate her perhaps, yet could not help eſteeming her ſo much, that ſhe boaſted of being her friend. The family of Thianges through her applied with confidence to the king. Madame de Rochechouart did not diſdain to be her penſioner: the marquis d'Antin was

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one of her favourites: and the duke de Vivonne frequently ſaid, 'There is be-'tween madame de Maintenon and my 'ſiſter, as great a diſtance, as between 'her brother and myſelf.'

The marchioneſs de Monteſpan was fond of talking of madame de Maintenon, and never mentioned her with diſreſpect. It was to her ſhe owed a penſion of twenty four thouſand Louis d'ors a year, which the king ſettled on her when ſhe retired to Paris. While the court ſtaid at Marly, ſhe uſed to paſs ſome days at her houſe of Clagny; and when the king ſet out for Fontainbleau, ſhe went to Peter Bourg, where from an alley in the garden ſhe could ſtill ſee the king withont being ſeen. She lived in Paris with great oeconomy, and was but little reſpected: ſhe always avoided the ſociety of women whoſe characters had been irreproachable, and ſolicited that of coquets, whom age had brought back to devotion: ſhe was never ſatisfied with amaſſing riches, never took any part in the affairs of her children, and was always apprehenſive of being robbed. How different the wife and the miſtreſs! there immenſe riches and inſatiable avarice were joined, here a moderate income and a boundleſs generoſity. While madame de Monteſpan enjoyed the reward of her frailty, madame de Maintenon had only

a penſion of forty eight thouſand livres, and would not permit the king to make any addition to it. She often uſed to ſay, 'His 'miſtreſſes coſt him more in one month, 'than I do in a year.'

CHAPTER VII.

The counteſs de Caylus.

MADAME de Maintenon never quitted that moderation which ſhe had preſcribed to herſelf; ſhe was ſo far from making her enemies feel the weight of her power, that it was not her fault that they believed ſhe was poſſeſſed of any. The favourites of kings are wholly employed in augmenting their influence; madame de Maintenon laboured to conceal hers: ſhe had none of that oſtentation which gives luſtre to power, that artifice which ſecures it, and that vanity of giving away employments, which makes friends. Her diſintereſtedneſs was ſo great, that in her it was ſcarcely a virtue. 'You enjoy your moderation, ſaid ma-'dame de Caylus to her, and your family 'is the victim of it.'

She loved the count d'Aubigné her brother with great tenderneſs, but ſhe could not

not acquire his affection. D'Aubigné aſked for every thing, and madame de Maintenon ſolicited for nothing: he revenged himſelf by giving her every day new mortifications. After an abſence of five years he appeared again at Verſailles, ſurpaſſed all the courtiers in grandeur, made a ſhort viſit to his ſiſter, diſappeared without taking leave of her, and went to Paris to diſplay in publick places the airs of a ſubaltern favourite, or to reſign himſelf in ſuſpected houſes to the laviſh expenſes of obſcure luxury. He affected to converſe with the malecontents, to exclaim againſt the miniſters, and to prefer the ſociety of Monteſpan and Lauzun to that of any other. He ſaid to a perſon who intreated his intereſt, 'Do not own 'that you know me, for I am the worſt 'company in Paris.'

However he ſtill felt the effects of the king's friendſhip for his ſiſter. He was made lieutenant-general, tho' he had no claim to ſo high a poſt in the army from his ſeniority: he had the government of Berry, although it was ſolicited by noblemen whoſe ſervices better deſerved it. Madame de Maintenon grew at length weary of giving to a man whoſe prodigality knew no bounds, and who was indigent and diſtreſt with a hundred thouſand livres a

year.* D'Aubigné aſked for the chief command of the army: Madame de Maintenon was the only one who thought this claim ridiculous, and gave him an anſwer, which for its magnanimity would in this age be called ridiculous likewiſe.

Mademoiſelle de Murçay, the daughter of monſieur de Villette, and conſequently neice to madame de Maintenon according to the cuſtom of Britany, poſſeſſed every thing that could promiſe her a great eſtabliſhment; an intereſt ſo powerful that it was deemed equal to the largeſt fortune, the ſprightlineſs of youth, the allurements of beauty, and the charms of wit. It was not poſſible for languor to approach her, all was delightful hurry, all-pleaſing ſolicitude. Her preſence diffuſed joy whereever ſhe came, the ſweeteſt-tuned inſtrument was harſh to the inchanting ſound of her voice in declamation. She would have been abſolutely perfect, if her ſhape had been more free and her air leſs ſtudied, and if her extreme gaiety had not given her an air of coquetry, which her aunt and time corrected rather too late.

The count de Caylus married her, with her claims which were nothing, her hopes

* The author of the age of Lewis XIV. ſays, that ſhe gave him ſome ſecret grants upon the farmes, but he was ill informed.

which

which were not more, but which were valued at a high rate, and a penſion which was indeed a trifle. The king made him *menin** to the dauphin, and preſented the bride on her nuptial day with a necklace of pearls worth ten thouſand crowns. The courtiers were greatly ſurpriſed, that madame de Maintenon ſhould not have married more advantageouſly a neice ſo lovely, and ſo tenderly beloved. They had reaſon to be more ſo at the denial ſhe gave Boufflers, a man whoſe virtue charmed her, whoſe ambition prompted him to the nobleſt actions, and made him reſolve to raiſe himſelf or periſh. Boufflers deſpiſing the reports of calumny which accuſed mademoiſelle de Murçay of being capable of the weakneſſes of love, although in reality ſhe loved nothing but perfumes, had demanded her in marriage, and had this anſwer from madame de Maintenon, worthy, ſays the abbé de Choiſy, of being engraved in letters of gold: 'Monſieur, my neice is not a match great enough for you. However I am extremely ſenſible of the honour you deſigned me: I will not give her to you, but I will for the future look upon you as my nephew.'

* This term the French have borrowed from the Spaniards; the Spaniſh princes have always a certain number of young boys of quality, who are brought up with them, and called menins or favourites, and ſome of them have penſions; the queen of Spain has alſo her menine.

This alliance by adoption was of great uſe to him; his fortune was rapid: three months afterwards he had the government of Luxembourg, the poſt of colonel-general of dragoons notwithſtanding the oppoſition made by Louvois who ſolicited it for Tilladet his couſin-germain, the rank of lieutenant-general by a particular promotion, the government of Metz, without having aſked for it, and every opportunity to diſplay thoſe abilities, which madame de Maintenon had diſcovered in him.

The counteſs de Caylus did not pleaſe the king at firſt, he thought her affected, and a coquet; madame de Maintenon accuſtomed him to her gaiety, and he began to think it leſs exceptionable. She was twice baniſhed to Paris on account of ſome little errors in her conduct: the firſt baniſhment continued a long time, becauſe when ſhe received the order, ſhe ſaid, 'The court is ſo dull that it is baniſh-'ment to live here.' And in effect inſtead of a melancholy party at piquet which ſhe uſed to have at Verſailles, in Paris ſhe had the moſt brilliant ſociety, la Fare to whom love *promiſed a look from Caylus* to cure all his ills, the abbé de Rohan, young, amorous, who neglected neither fortune nor pleaſures, Villeroi at firſt called the charming, afterwards the haughty

ty Villeroi, who behaved with ſuch levity to women, and who to his attendants ſaid with ſuch arrogance, *have they put any gold in my pocket?* The ſecond baniſhment of madame de Caylus ended with a retreat of eight days among the carmelites; madame de Maintenon went to fetch her from the convent, and brought her back to court, a devotee, reconciled to God, and to her. Their friendſhip was after this ſometimes interrupted, but a great fund of mutual eſteem, the neceſſity for a confident on madame de Maintenon's ſide, the attraction of greatneſs on that of madame de Caylus, ſoon diſſipated theſe little ſtorms. The counteſs would often offend her, but always ſure of obtaining her pardon, ſhe had nothing to ſtruggle with, but that falſe pride which ſought to retain her in error. Her mind was light, airy, volatile; her heart ſteady in virtue. She was a calviniſt, a quieteſt, a janſeniſt, and deiſt by turns; ſhe wandered from one opinion to another, and at length returned to that which fixes them all by a blind and credulous faith. She had not eſcaped the tyranny of love; ſhe had a taſte for wit, an inclination to intrigue and devotion; ſhe concluded all by a uniform life of virtue. Thoſe who affirm that ſhe hated her aunt, notwithſtanding all thoſe inſtances of tenderneſs which ſhe received from her, are refuted by the collection of

their letters, and by the memoirs of madame de Caylus which breathe nothing but their mutual eſteem and confidence. Probably ſhe was a little diſguſted with madame de Maintenon for an eſtabliſhment ſo far below her expectations, but ſhe who had the care of her youth endeavoured to inſpire her with her own moderation. Her marriage might have been more illuſtrious, but it could not have been more happy, ſince it has given to arts, to letters, to ſociety the count de Caylus.

The marquis de Murçay fell in love with mademoiſelle de Boisfranc. Her father had been ſuperintendant of the houſehold of the duke of Orleans, but was diſmiſſed by him upon ſome diſguſt. Mademoiſelle de Boisfranc had refuſed the duke de Roquelaure, and now deſpiſed monſieur de Murçay, becauſe ſhe had an immenſe fortune. Madame de Maintenon could not be prevailed upon to take any ſtep in favour of the lover. Father de la Chaiſe leſs ſcrupulous, undertook the affair and ſucceeded. The king gave the marquis the command of a troop of horſe, and his brother the queen's regiment of dragoons. Madame de Maintenon neither requeſted nor hoped * for ſuch favours.

* Memoirs of the marquis de Dangeau.

The

The chevalier de Murçay ſignalized himſelf in the battle of Anguyen, and died of the wounds he received there.

The marquis de Villette, their father, was reduced to ſome penſions given in conſideration of his long ſervices. In every promotion that was made the public named him a marſhal of France, and the marine earneſtly demanded him, yet he remained without preferment, notwithſtanding his juſt claim to it. The family of Saint Hermines, numerous enough to invade every thing, were removed from all, and the counteſs de Mailly died poor.

Madame de Maintenon only ſhewed this moderation; when herſelf or her relations were concerned, it was almoſt a misfortune to be too nearly allied to her. She married advantageouſly mademoiſelle de Leuweſtein, of the houſe of Bavaria, who took the titles in the act of celebration, which ſo enraged the dauphineſs, that ſhe cauſed the regiſter of the pariſh of Verſailles to be brought to her, and tore it in pieces, exclaiming againſt the ſervile complaiſance of the rector and the inſolence of madame de Dangeau. She made the fortune of mademoiſelle de Rambures, whom ſhe did not love, and married the marquis d'Antin to mademoiſelle

ſelle d'Uzés, through the aſcendant ſhe had over the miſanthrope Montauzier, and ſeized the moment, when madame de Monteſpan was fallen, to raiſe the ſon.

In her elevation ſhe forgot not her friends. The marquis de Dangeau had all that a courtier could wiſh for, a large revenue, a conſiderable employment, great influence, and various pleaſures. Barillon, who had been ambaſſador to England, and was in danger of being diſgraced, ſhe protected from his enemies, and afforded him the means of paſſing in tranquillity an agreeable old age. Mademoiſelle de Scuderi had a penſion of two thouſand livres: Deſhoulieres, very conſiderable gratuities: the abbé Tetu ſeveral ſinecures: Racine and Deſpréaux the ſalaries and titles of poſts without the buſineſs: Vardes and Buſſi were recalled from exile: the marquis de Montchevreuil was made governor of the duke du Maine and of Saint Germains, and in ſuch high eſteem at court, that the king uſed to ſay, 'If *I was not Bourbon*, 'I could wiſh to be *Montchevreuil* *.' 'All the courtiers, added he, ſolicit in-'ceſſantly for favours, Montchevreuil a-'lone never aſks me for any thing.' In effect he never complained that he had

* Memoirs of the marquis de Dangeau.

not,

not, during ten years, received a penny of a penſion of ten thouſand livres. After the death of the count de Mornay his ſon, the king carried him into his cloſet and intreated him to tell him in what ſituation his family was left. Adding, 'Do not now conſider me as your maſter, but ſpeak to me as your friend.' Madame de Maintenon often ſaid, 'Of all thoſe whom I have placed at court, Montchevreuil alone has ſucceeded.' However, he was certainly a man of an antiquated virtue.

No one ever repented of having known, loved, or ſerved her: a glorious teſtimony to the honour of a woman, who poſſeſſed ſo high a degree of favour, and ſo long poſſeſſed it. If ſome of her inſatiable friends murmured at the few benefits they received, no citizen complained of having ſuffered any injury from her; and even at that very time, when ſhe was accuſed of having thrown the ſtate into confuſion by her counſels, no Frenchman ever charged her with indulging private reſentment, or countenancing open violence.

In others ſhe required the ſame diſintereſtedneſs ſhe practiſed herſelf. The king often ſaid to her, 'Why, madame,

'do

'do you not aſk ſomething of me? you 'only have nothing.' 'Sire, ſhe replied, 'you make it unneceſſary for me to aſk.' This is what her graſping family called a mean complaiſance, but the people admired a favourite, who was diſintereſted enough to be diſliked by her relations, and whom the nobility adored as their benefactreſs and ſupport.

The End of the EIGHTH BOOK.

BOOK

BOOK THE NINTH.

Saint Cyr.

MADAME de Maintenon often uſed to ſay, ‘ I am ‘ thought to be the ableſt ‘ woman in the world, that ‘ with my head upon my ‘ pillow I have contriv- ‘ ed, conducted, and finiſhed the noble ‘ eſtabliſhment of Saint Cyr. However ‘ this community is neither the plan of ‘ a ſingle day, nor the production of a ‘ ſingle brain: opportunities of relieving ‘ the diſtreſſed frequently offered, and I ‘ gladly embraced them: I purſued this ‘ inclination, without pretending to any ‘ thing more than occaſional charities; ‘ my deſign was inſenſibly ſtrengthened ‘ and extended by the firſt ſucceſs; one ‘ idea led to another, one good action ‘ produced a better; and ſome benefacti- ‘ ons,

'ons, which were likely to die with me, 'have formed an eſtabliſhment which 'will end only with this empire.'

It is this train of ideas, and this progreſſive ſcheme that I am now going to unfold. Thoſe who love the public good will readily pardon me, in giving a minute deſcription of a benefaction which may be imitated.

CHAPTER I.

Madame de Maintenon's *charitable inclinations.*

MADAME de Maintenon was always extremely fond of children, and had a particular talent for educating them: ſhe was never without ſome young girls in her houſe, whom ſhe delighted in her leiſure moments to inſtruct. She had formed the duke du Main, who began to fulfil all the hopes that had been conceived of him: Mademoiſelle de Nantes, whoſe very faults were pleaſing: Madame de Montgon, who at eight years of age, ſaid madame de Sevigné, knew the court better than the oldeſt and moſt experienced courtiers: and afterwards madame de Caylus, whoſe memoirs, which are ſoon

ſoon to be publiſhed, will praiſe her more than all my eulogiums: the marchioneſs d'Havrincourt, the ornament of Cambreſis and Artois: madame d'Hauſſy, whom ſhe qualified for the education of princes: the dutcheſs of Burgundy, who was too ſoon ſnatched from us: and the lady of marſhal de Noailles, whom it is ſufficient to name.

As ſoon as the firſt rays of ſovereign favour ſhone upon and diſtinguiſhed her, ſhe conceived the deſign of ſome eſtabliſhment in favour of girls of condition that were born to no fortunes. The ſituation ſhe had formerly been in herſelf, made her eagerly ſeek the means of relieving them, and inſpired her with a reſolution to free them from a ſtate more dangerous to virtue, than humiliating to birth.

Every day ſhe acknowledged the benefits ſhe received from God, by ſharing them with perſons who like her knew the diſtreſſes of a laborious youth: 'My 'ſituation, ſaid ſhe, is diſagreeable on 'all ſides, but it has afforded me the 'pleaſure of giving.'

She was moved to the tendereſt compaſſion at the ſight of any unfortunate family: the poverty of others became in a manner perſonal. To excite her compaſſion,

paſſion, there was no neceſſity for her viſiting the ſad retreats of bashful indigence, ſhe needed only to recal to her remembrance the diſtreſſes of her youth.

In preſent grandeur we often recollect paſt poverty, only to uſe means to make others forget it. Madame de Maintenon always remembered hers, and remembered it only that ſhe might be more charitable. It is the natural conſequence of great power and riches, to harden the hearts of thoſe whom providence has raiſed to them. Madame de Maintenon looked upon her elevation as a burden which the practice of benevolence could alone enable her to bear. 'I would, ſaid ſhe one day, I would 'relieve all the diſtreſſed nobility of 'the kingdom.' A project impoſſible to be executed, yet it ſhewed the greatneſs of her mind, and the fervor of her charity. In her it was not a wandering emotion, but a ſentiment deeply impreſſed, a ſentiment ſhe had from nature, and which religion ſanctified: 'To 'relieve the miſerable, ſaid ſhe, it is not 'neceſſary to be a chriſtian.'

CHAP-

CHAPTER II.

Ruel.

THE caſtle of Maintenon may be called the cradle of Saint Cyr: and madame de Brinon there firſt diſplayed a zeal which ſought only to produce itſelf, and which thirſted after riches only to be bountiful. Madame de Brinon was an urſuline nun, who wandered from cloiſter to cloiſter involved in the ruin of her convent. She was the daughter of a preſident of the parliament of Normandy: her mother received her again into her houſe, and took her with her to Monchevreuil, where madame de Maintenon became acquainted with her. She was charmed with the fortitude of the nun, who, tho' in the world, reſolved to acquit herſelf of all the duties of a ſtate which ſhe had embraced only in compliance with the will of her parents. To perform her vow of inſtructing the young and the ignorant, ſhe aſſembled at Montchevreuil all the domeſtics and the children in that neighbourhood, and taught them the elements

ments of the chriſtian doctrine. Madame de Maintenon contracted a ſtrict friendſhip with a woman ſo much the more eſtimable, as ſhe had all the ſpirit of her profeſſion without having a taſte for it.

Madame de Brinon loſt her mother, and with her all her ſupport. She then aſſociated herſelf with madame de Saint Pierre the companion of her misfortunes. One convent received them both, till the debts which had forced them from the firſt, obliged them to leave the ſecond alſo.

1680. They afterwards hired a houſe in Auvers, and received penſioners there: from thence preſſed by their neceſſities they went to Montmorency, where the ſame poverty purſued them.

At length they determined to have recourſe to madame de Maintenon, through a hope that proſperity had not rendered her inacceſſible to pity. The court was then at Saint Germains, and madame de Maintenon was with the king. She quitted all to receive them, and ſent them away full of pleaſing expectation, gratitude and reverence. Madame de Maintenon went ſeveral times to ſee them in private, and becoming a near witneſs of their indigence and capacity, ſhe

ſhe reſolved to relieve the one, and employ the other, by bringing this little community home to her.

In order to afford them preſent aſſiſt- 1682.
ance, part of thoſe penſioners which ſhe had in different places, ſhe ſettled at Ruel, in a convenient houſe which ſhe furniſhed for them herſelf. She there increaſed the number of her adopted daughters to ſixty, and gave them teachers, to relieve madame de Brinon of ſome part of her labour, and permitted her to ſend for madame du Baſques and madame d'Angiens from the ſame order, and the ſame ruined convent.

The number of penſioners increaſed every day: they had already a hundred, and the court did not know that there was one: with ſuch ſecreſy and prudence did madame de Maintenon conduct her charities.

CHAP-

CHAPTER III.

Noiſy.

MADAME de Maintenon now went often to Ruel, to obſerve what progreſs the children made in their education, and took delight to catechiſe them herſelf. 'How impatient am I, 'writes ſhe to madame de Brinon, to be 'in that houſe which I love ſo much!' Her viſits became more frequent, and more inconvenient on account of the extreme reſtraint her ſituation laid her under. The firſt ſucceſs induced her to bring ſtill nearer to her a ſchool for which her affection was increaſing every day.

A favourable opportunity offered. The incloſing of the little park of Verſailles, and the enlargement of the other, made ſeveral fine houſes which the king had purchaſed of the proprietors wholly uſeleſs. Madame de Maintenon aſked for one of them: the king offered her Noiſy, a houſe that had been built by monſieur de Gondy, and was incloſed in the little park. Madame de Maintenon, who had not carried her views ſo high, told him that the ſmalleſt farm there would be ſufficient for the uſe

uſe ſhe deſigned it. The king, as emulous of the charity, as charmed with the benevolent diſpoſition of madame de Maintenon, inſiſted upon her accepting Noiſy; and even told her, that to preſerve the building, it was neceſſary that it ſhould be inhabited. He gave orders immediately for the neceſſary repairs, which ten thouſand crowns compleated in four months. The houſe was very convenient, its ſituation healthy; water only was wanting. The day after Candlemaſs was fixed for the tranſlation.

The girls were divided into four claſſes, and each claſs was diſtinguiſhed by the colour of the ribbon with which their caps were tied; the firſt had a blue, the ſecond yellow, the third green, and the fourth red. The black ribbon was deſtined for the reward of merit.

In this little community the ranks were confounded; ſome were daughters of the nobleſſe, others of creditable tradeſmen, but all poor. Madame de Maintenon, deſirous of doing two good works at once, preferred the children of new converts; and that the peaſants in her lands might partake of the benefit of this eſtabliſhment, ſhe compoſed a body of their little daughters, which ſhe called the ſiſters of charity, or the blue girls. They were lodged in a pavilion at the foot of the caſtle, and in-

ſtructed ſeparately by the penſionaries, who were all upon the ſame footing with the daughters of the nobleſſe.

Madame de Maintenon viſited them every day. She employed herſelf in the claſſes, ſhe made regulations, ſhe viſited the ſick, dined with the children, and often upon the ſame proviſion. She had always five or ſix of the genteeleſt and moſt agreeable with her in the palace.

Their education was carefully attended to, and great progreſs was made in it. Madame de Maintenon gave large preſents to madame de Brinon, that ſhe might if poſſible cloy that avarice which is generally found in thoſe who have ſolemnly renounced the goods of this world. Madame de Brinon began to look upon preſents as offerings to the veſtry; and, in order to lay the relations of the children under contribution, the corps of Saint Candide, which the pope had given to madam de Maintenon, and ſhe to Noiſy, already performed miracles and brought in large ſums.

Madame de Maintenon was offended at theſe mean artifices; ſhe was ſhock'd at the ſcandal it might give, but diſſembled her uneaſineſs, ſent away the greedy almoner,

and

and ſettled a penſion of a thouſand livres upon madame de Brinon.

When diſintereſtedneſs was introduced into this community, the regulations of the inſtitution were more ſtrictly obſerved: madame de Maintenon ſaw with pleaſure the ſucceſs of her liberality, and this induced her to multiply her gifts. To take from madame de Brinon all pretence for hoarding up money, ſhe provided for her relations, who were very numerous and very poor; ſhe had not yet done ſo much for her own.

The extreme fondneſs madame de Maintenon diſcovered for this community, made the ladies of the court deſirous to ſee it. All applauded; and madame de Monteſpan, who was able to have done more, and had done nothing, was confounded.

The king's curioſity was excited by what he heard; he went to Noiſy with all the courtiers; they admired and praiſed all they ſaw with as much freedom as if the king had not been preſent. From that time the petitions from officers were ſent to madame de Maintenon; ſhe received their daughters, and the king ſettled a fund upon his alms for the payment of their penſions to madame de Brinon upon the ſame footing as the reſt.

The report of this eſtabliſhment ſpread over the provinces. Madame de Maintenon was ſolicited on all ſides: ſhe was ſo moved with the poverty of the nobleſſe, and at the ſight of the children which were preſented to her, that after having ſold her jewels, her horſes, and even her cloaths, ſhe mixed her tears with theirs, and ſaid to them: 'Providence will not abandon you; I was born as poor, and more unhappy than you are.' Beauty joined with poverty never ſuffered a denial; to ſnatch from the ſeduction of the world, ſuch girls, whoſe blooming charms expoſed them to all its ſnares, was one of her favourite charities.

CHAPTER IV.

Scheme for the eſtabliſhment of Saint-Cyr.

HER compaſſion made her break through the law ſhe had preſcribed to herſelf, of never demanding any thing of the king. She repreſented to him: 'That by eſtabliſhing companies of gentlemen upon the frontiers, he had greatly relieved the diſtreſſes of the nobleſſe: but that her ſex was equally worthy of his attention,

'tion, as being the weakeſt, and conſe-
'quently more expoſed to miſery.'

'That great part of the nobleſſe was in
'ſuch extreme poverty, that every day
'young women deſcended from the moſt
'ancient families, were ſeen reduced to
'beggary, wandering from province to
'province, ſubjected to a thouſand dan-
'gers, and a prey to the moſt mortifying
'temptations, becauſe with their fathers
'remained only the remembrance of their
'ſervices, or the tokens of the great ac-
'tions of their anceſtors.'

'That it was for his intereſt and glory
'to keep alive by rewards and benefac-
'tions that noble emulation, that deſire
'of honour which induced his nobleſſe to
'ſacrifice at all times their lives in his
'ſervice.'

'That, as a chriſtian, it was his duty to
'dedicate his power to the relief of the
'unfortunate, and the comfort of the mi-
'ſerable; that as the father of his country
'he was obliged to ſuccour families whoſe
'chiefs, after having ſhed their blood in his
'ſervice, ſaw thoſe children who ardent-
'ly deſired to ſhed theirs alſo for him in
'their turn, depreſſed by poverty, and lan-
'guiſhing in diſtreſs.'

Madame de Maintenon repreſented theſe truths to him in ſo many different lights, and enforced them with ſo much energy, that the king was greatly affected. He reflected, he examined them more deeply. He cauſed enquiries to be made into the ſituation of his nobleſſe. The aſtoniſhment into which he was thrown by the deſcription of their poverty, whoſe fathers, after having glorioufly died in his ſervice, left them deſolate, hopeleſs and undone, made the converſation frequently turn upon this melancholy ſubject. Lewis was not one of thoſe princes who feared being melted to compaſſion.

The fervent charity of madame de Maintenon made her attentive to every favourable moment, and her ſolid underſtanding afforded her the means to take advantage of them. Kings ought always to have a favourite who has experienced poverty: madame de Maintenon had ſeverely felt it; ſhe ſhewed him every advantage the ſtate would owe to the eſtabliſhment ſhe had begun; ſhe told him that a good education would perpetuate virtue and honour in families, would ſpread piety over the provinces, and bind the nobleſſe to him by new ties.

Struck with her reaſons, the king ſaid to her, ‘ but, madam, what is it you would ‘ do?

'do? no queen of France has ever done 'the like.'* With Lewis it was only neceſſary to know the charity, to beſtow it with magnificence; he improved upon madame de Maintenon's ſcheme, and reſolved upon a foundation for five hundred young girls of diſtinction. The marquis de Louvois was terrified at the expence, and madame de Maintenon at the difficulty of educating ſo many. They confined themſelves to two hundred and fifty, thirty ſix of which were to be profeſſed, and twenty four lay ſiſters.

Madame de Maintenon entered into all the particulars of the expence, forgot not the moſt minute, held a mean between extreme abundance and extreme frugality, and traced the plan of an eaſy but not a ſuperfluous life.

The place proper for this eſtabliſhment was the next ſubject of their deliberations. It was neceſſary in the choice of it to conſult the inclinations of madame de Maintenon, which would often lead her to viſit it, and the obligation ſhe was under not to go far from Verſailles.

The king propoſed Verſailles itſelf, or between Verſailles and Paris; but ſhe intreated him to reflect, that nothing would

* Memoirs of the abbé Pirot.

be more disadvantageous to the community than frequent visits; that education would suffer by them; that the asylum of innocence ought not to be in a place where every thing was a snare to it; that an inclination for the world would enter there with the grandees; that they ought to chuse a situation at such a distance from Versailles, that the community might be secured from the croud of importunate visitors, which its contiguity would draw to it, and yet near enough to have its subsistence from thence, and be warmed with the first rays from the throne.

At length Saint Cyr was fixed upon, which is about half a league distant from the court. The marquis de Louvois went thither, and gave orders to Mansard to examine the situation, the air, the facility of having water. Besides its being in the neighbourhood of Versailles, this place might be incloſed in the park, which would serve as a double security against the insults that more distant convents are sometimes exposed to.

The convent of the Benedictine nuns at Saint Cyr, which madame de Maintenon and the marquis de Louvois went to examine, appeared extremely fit for their purpose. They offered to purchase it: the nuns were alarmed: 'our order, said they, 'has

'has continued here ever ſince the reign of 'the holy king Dagobert.' They knew not perhaps that this monarch, a devotee, and a libertine at the ſame time, founded a convent and a ſeraglio where-ever he went. Monſieur de Louvois gave them peremptory orders to quit the convent within fifteen days. Madame de Maintenon, whoſe intereſt it was to have been againſt them, became their protector. She would not ſuffer her foundation to commence with an act of violence and injuſtice: the Benedictines demanded five hundred thouſand livres for their houſe, and the extravagance of this demand ſaved it.

Manſard had orders to look out for another convenient ſituation, and to take madame de Maintenon's directions in every thing. The architect choſe a houſe which belonged to the marquis de Saint Briſſon-Seguier. The king purchaſed it for ninety one thouſand livres. The bargain was concluded in the form of an exchange between monſieur de Saint Briſſon and the marſhal de la Feuillade. *April*, 9, 1685.

CHAPTER V.

Saint-Cyr.

May, 1685. THE building was immediately begun; beſides a great number of workmen who came from different places, the troops that were encamped at Verſailles were employed. In the building of Saint-Cyr there were ſeen at one time more than nine hundred maſons, four hundred ſtone-cutters, as many carpenters, in a word above two thouſand ſix hundred men carried on the work.

The king having aſked the marquis de Louvois what ſum was neceſſary for the maintainance of this houſe, madame de Maintenon preventing the miniſter's reply, told him that it was not eaſy to ſpecify all the particulars, unleſs it was certainly known in what manner the community ſhould be ſettled, that proviſions and cloaths were not the only things to be conſidered, but an infinite number of others; and that, in order to ſatisfy him on this head, it was neceſſary to have the expences calculated by ſome perſon, who by entering into the very ſpirit of the inſtitution, might be enabled to give him an exact and

and particular account of all that was neceſſary for it.

Some days afterward, the miniſter told the king, that the expence of this community would amount to two hundred thouſand francs a year. The king replied, that madame de Maintenon had drawn up a memoire, which he thought very juſt, and which did not make the expences ſo high. Louvois juſt looked at the total, and told the king, that it was not poſſible a hundred thouſand, or even a hundred and fifty thouſand francs, could be ſufficient for the maintainance of the community: the event ſhewed that he was not deceived, and that madame de Maintenon had aſked for the publick with the ſame moderation as for herſelf.

After ſome debate between the miniſter and madame de Maintenon, the king fixed upon a mean, and endowed the houſe with fifty thouſand crowns; he committed to madame de Maintenon the care of furniſhing it, and allowed her to take what ſum ſhe pleaſed for that purpoſe. This was ſufficient to tie her hands, ſo much the more frugal as ſhe was authoriſed to be liberal, ſhe expended only fifty thouſand crowns.

While at Verſailles they were calculating the expence of this community, at Noiſy the abbé Gobelin was employed in examining the vocation of the girls, who were deſirous of retiring from the world, and had talents for educating youth. There were not to be any nuns in the community; the king did not like religious orders, and madame de Maintenon hated the little monkiſh meanneſſes, either real or attributed to them. The king and madame de Maintenon were reſolved to have a community which ſhould have all the virtues of a cloiſter, unincumbered with the exerciſes of one. It was their deſign to keep thoſe for whom it was founded at a diſtance from the world, but not to render them incapable of entering into it.

The king would not allow the religious habit to the profeſſed; madame de Maintenon therefore invented one which reſembled that of the ladies of Miramion, and preſented one of her women dreſſed in it to the king. 'What a devil of a 'nun's cap have you given them?' ſaid the king. The little cap was altered, and the king was pleaſed with the reſt. He added the gold croſs for the ladies, and a large mantle training upon the ground for the robes of the choir, ſuch as they wear at preſent.

CHAP.

CHAPTER VI.

Ordinances of Saint-Cyr.

MEAN time madame de Brinon was employed in forming a plan of the ordinances, and went to Verſailles to conſult madame de Maintenon, and to take her directions; ſhe was eloquent and ſpoke with propriety and gracefulneſs, and greatly pleaſed the king: when the ordinances were digeſted and put in order, Racine and Boileau reviſed the ſtyle. The biſhop of Chartres, the abbé Gobelin, and father de la Chaiſe, corrected the more eſſential faults. Cardinal Ranucci, the pope's nuncio, thought them ſo beautiful, that he ſent a copy of them to his holineſs.

It were to be wiſhed that theſe ordinances were made publick: they are a maſterpiece of good-ſenſe and devotion which is not often found together, and might be of great uſe in reforming the errors of other communities. The foundreſs well knew how to obſerve a mean between the pride of chapters and the meanneſs of convents; ſhe united eaſe with

with regularity, and a life of piety with a life of happineſs.

She was apprehenſive that madame de Brinon might inſpire this growing community with a taſte for grandeur, and that the neighbourhood of a court, a royal foundation, the king's viſits, and even her own, might ſuggeſt to the ladies an idea of ſplendor, and give them the air of canoneſſes; ſhe therefore earneſtly recommended to their confeſſors to preach humility to the candidates, and it was contrary to her inclination that they were called *the ladies of Saint-Lewis.*

Monſieur de Villeroi biſhop of Chartres was for the ladies making abſolute vows. Father de la Chaiſe thought the prelate might diſpenſe with them, and maintained, that the children would be educated better by perſons who ſtill had connexions with the world, than by women who had renounced it. That abſolute vows would ſubject them to many ceremonies and exerciſes of religion, and take up great part of that time which could not be better employed than in the education of youth; that there was great reaſon to apprehend the tender and flexible minds of the ſcholars might take a bent to cloiſtral devotion, from the auſtere and penitent behaviour of their miſtreſſes, and entertain a deſire

a deſire for a ſtate, the happineſs of which they would every moment hear extolled, and this would hinder them from becoming uſeful members of ſociety, which was the deſign of the inſtitution.

'The purpoſe of this foundation, ſaid 'he, is not to multiply convents, there 'are ſufficient already, but to ſettle agree-'ably in the world young women vir-'tuouſly educated. There are already too 'many nuns, and too few good wives 'and mothers. The education given at 'Saint-Cyr will produce great virtues, 'and thoſe inſtead of being ſhut up in 'cloiſters ought to be produced in the 'world, to correct and ſanctify it.'

The king who greatly approved of his reaſons, ſaid, *I will found a community and not a convent.* The ladies made only conditional vows; the event will ſhew that father de la Chaiſe was miſtaken, and that this houſe required abſolute vows.

CHAP.

CHAPTER VII.

Building of Saint-Cyr.

MEAN time the edifice was raiſed with a truly royal magnificence; every obſtacle was removed by the unwearied attention of madame de Maintenon. Although the ground was marſhy, and the diſtribution of the apartments was not eaſily ſettled, yet the building was finiſhed in almoſt as little time as would be now employed in projecting it. The whole was compleated in fifteen months, and the expences amounted to fifteen hundred thouſand francs.

The magnificence of Lewis was every where to be ſeen in his edifice, but many conſiderable faults were committed through precipitation. They made uſe of green wood throughout all the building. The ground floor was too low by more than ſix feet, the cellars, which were large and numerous, became ſinks and common ſewers; the ſprings they ſought for were loſt by raiſing the earth, and their ſources turned by digging the cellars; which obliged them to raiſe a building without the compaſs of the incloſure, to fix

a pump

a pump that drew the water into an aqueduct, and conveyed it into all the offices of the houſe. At Ruel they had not water enough, at Saint-Cyr they had too much. The door of the church was placed in a corner behind the coach-houſes. The organs and the confeſſionaries were together, although their uſes were ſo very different. The foundation being upon marſhy ground, is ruined by the water.

In 1752 they were obliged to repair part of the building, the foundation of which had ſunk five or ſix inches. In a word, the houſe of the ladies of Saint Lewis requires ſuch frequent and expenſive repairs, that the ſucceſſor of the prince who founded it has been heard to ſay; *I find it will be neceſſary to build them a houſe in another place.*

Theſe faults excepted, nothing can be more grand, more majeſtick, or more convenient; the beautiful manner of Manſard is ſeen in the whole building. The inſide ſhews the genius of madame de Maintenon, who regulated with the niceſt attention whatever belonged to the elegance and convenience of the church, the great room where the aſſembly is held, the refectory, the offices, the four claſſes, and the bed-chambers, leaving all the

the reſt to the taſte and ſkill of the architect. The outſide is more magnificent than regular, but the exquiſite order within cannot be viewed without admiration.

CHAPTER VIII.

The intentions of the King.

THE king thought this eſtabliſhment worthy of his greateſt attention. He wrote with his own hand upon the back of an account, the reſult of his reflexions on this ſubject, which equally proves his exceſſive goodneſs and his capacity for minute details, notwithſtanding his more important deſigns; and here it follows:

For the eſtabliſhment of Saint-Cyr.

'Patents to be drawn up.

'Eſtates to be given for the foundation.

'Ornaments for the church.

'Furniture of every kind.

'A counſellor of ſtate to be appointed,
'to aſſiſt in ſettling the accounts.

'Money

'Money to be advanced, to ſerve till 'the firſt day of July, on which day the 'ladies enter Saint-Cyr.

'To be propoſed that the houſe be en- 'dowed with a larger revenue than is ne- 'ceſſary for its maintainance, upon con- 'dition that what remains ſhall be appro- 'priated to portioning the young ladies 'who marry from Saint-Cyr.

'A conſiderable ſum to be ſet apart for 'unforeſeen occaſions.

'Regulations to be made: the ordinan- 'ces to be examined: proper objects of this 'charity to be choſen.

'Precautions to be taken againſt diſor- 'ders, as well in manners, as in the ad- 'miniſtration of the revenues.

'All preſents to be prohibited, the houſe 'not to be allowed to acquire more reve- 'nues. Not to allow any more buildings 'for enlarging the houſe.

'The age and the time when the girls 'ſhall be received to be ſpecified; and the 'number of years they are to remain in 'the houſe.'

In

In June 1686, the king gave an edict of erection, which was regiſtred by the parliament the 18th of the ſame month. The preamble breathes the ſpirit of a father of the people.

'As we can never ſufficiently expreſs the great ſenſe we have of the valour and zeal which the nobleſſe of our kingdom have ſhewn upon all occaſions, by aſſiſting the deſigns we have formed, and which we have ſo happily accompliſhed for the granduer of our ſtate and the glory of our arms, the peace which we have ſo ſolidly eſtabliſhed, having afforded us leiſure and opportunity to extend our cares even to futurity, and to make the grandeur and happineſs of our monarchy durable, we have eſtabliſhed ſeveral ſocieties on our frontiers, where, under the command of brave and experienced officers, we have cauſed a great number of young gentlemen to be educated, that the ſeeds of honour and virtue derived to them by their birth may be carefully cultivated and improved, that they may be formed to military exerciſes by an exact and ſevere diſcipline, and rendered capable of ſupporting in their turn the honour of the French name. And becauſe we are convinced that it is no leſs juſt and equally uſeful to provide for the education of young women of noble extraction, eſpecially

cially for thoſe whoſe fathers have died in our ſervice, or being by their neceſſary expences in war reduced to poverty, and therefore unable to afford them a proper education, we have, upon mature deliberation, reſolved to found and eſtabliſh a houſe and community, wherein a conſiderable number of young girls, deſcended from noble families, and particularly ſuch whoſe fathers have died in our ſervice, or are at preſent employed in it, may be maintained and brought up in this community, in the principles of true piety and ſolid virtue, and receive ſuch an education as will ſuit their birth and ſex, according to the ſtate in which it may pleaſe God to place them; ſo that after being well brought up in this community, thoſe who leave it may carry into every province of our kingdom examples of modeſty and virtue, and contribute to the happineſs of families, which they enter by marriage, or to the edification of religious houſes, in which they choſe to conſecrate themſelves to the ſervice of God, for which purpoſe we have cauſed to be built the houſe of Saint-Cyr, *&c.*'

The firſt article eſtabliſhed * ſix and thirty ladies, whoſe number was not to be

* The king has made an alteration in this article, and permits as many lay ſiſters as ladies of the choir to the number of eighty perſons.

aug-

augmented, and who were to be choſen from among the two hundred and fifty young girls of noble extraction, of which the number is not expreſly limited: the nomination of whom is, in the third article, reſerved to the kings of France, who never choſe any but ſuch as can prove four deſcents of nobility. This is required only on the paternal ſide, becauſe of the many improper alliances. But the young lady who is preſented muſt be able to prove exactly the four deſcents from the father, by original writings, no collated copies being admitted.

By the fourth article the young ladies cannot be provided with vacant places, if they are not full ſeven years of age; or if they exceed twelve, and they are to ſtay in the community till they are twenty years of age.

By the ſeventh article the community is impowered to ſend back any of the young ladies to their relations when it ſhall judge proper, and the relations and guardians may take them out of the houſe when they pleaſe. By this article it is alſo provided that the ladies, the daughters of the nobleſſe, and the lay ſiſters ſhall be received into the community gratis, and all preſents or gratuities offered with them expreſly prohibited.

The

The eighth and ninth articles endow the community with the houſe, lands, and lordſhip of Saint-Cyr, the revenue of the abbey of Saint Denis, which had been already given by a brevet of the ſecond of May, and which at that time amounted to a hundred and fourteen thouſand livres, and fifty thouſand livres a year, taken upon the domains of the diſtrict of Paris, till a fund for this annual ſum was ſettled. Lands to the value of twenty thouſand ſeven hundred and fifty livres were ſtill wanting for the ſupport of the community.

By the tenth article, the houſe was expreſly forbid to receive for the future any augmentation of its revenue of what nature ſoever, except from the kings and queens of France, or from madame de Maintenon.

By the twelfth article, the money remaining in the treaſury was to be employed in giving portions to the daughters of the nobleſſe who married from the community, and when theſe funds were not ſufficient, money was to be paid out of the royal treaſury to contribute to their portions: thoſe who choſe a cloiſtral life were to be received gratis into the royal abbeys, to which the king has the right of nomination.

CHAP-

CHAPTER IX.

Formalities.

THE monks of Saint Denis murmured at theſe diſpoſitions, by which the privileges of an abbey were violated, whom the names, they ſaid, of ſo many monarchs who were buried there, ought to have made ſacred. The public thought, that it was entering into the views of the benefactors of the church, to conſecrate to the education of youth, thoſe revenues, which the corruption of the age had perverted to the luxury of a court abbé, or the gluttony of idle monks.

The court of Rome, which, to preſerve its rights, ſells to princes the privilege of doing good, claimed a great indemnification for the extinction of the abbey of Saint Denis *. Antony Arnauld, who was a great admirer of the new eſtabliſhment, although father de la Chaiſe had earneſtly recommended it, wrote long letters in ridicule of the pope's avarice: after many debates the king granted

* The king's brevet for uniting the revenue of this abbey to the houſe of Saint Lewis, is dated May 2d, 1686.

[twenty-

twenty-five thouſand crowns, and then Innocent the twelfth gave a bull in which he declares, that he made a *free* * gift of the revenue of the abbey of Saint Denis to the Community of Saint Lewis.

The biſhop of Chartres declared by an ordinance that it was the king's will and his, that madame de Maintenon ſhould be perpetual ſuperiour of this community, as well for ſpiritual as temporal affairs. The ladies ſent her a gold croſs, adorned with flowers de lis, and theſe two verſes of Racine engraved on it:

Elle eſt notre guide fidelle:
Notre félicité vient d'elle.

'Behold our faithful guide,
'Whence all our bliſs and pride.'

ELPHINSTON.

An ingenious alluſion to the croſs, and to her who was to wear it.

The king gave her a brevet, by which he inveſted her with all the rights, honours, and prerogatives of foundreſs of Saint-Cyr. Madame de Maintenon thought

* The court of Rome demanded one hundred and eighty thou and livres.

it her duty to refuſe theſe titles, but the king and her friends repreſenting to her that they ſignified nothing more, than that ſhe had patronized the foundation of Saint-Cyr, and conducted it in the beginning, ſhe admitted whatever titles they choſe to give her.

A certain abbé having filled a ſermon with her praiſes, ſhe intreated him to ſuppreſs them all; the preacher told her, that thoſe praiſes would inſpire her children of Saint-Cyr, with an emulation to virtue and piety: 'If you think ſo, ſhe replied, praiſe 'me as much as you pleaſe.'

She was named in the letters * patent, notwithſtanding her intreaties to the contrary, but prevailed upon the king not to inſiſt upon her effigies in the medal. In this piece is repreſented the ladies of Saint-Cyr, according to their different ages. The profeſt ladies have a kind of veil upon their heads, and a mantle over their habits. Piety is there repreſented, under the figure of a graceful woman veiled, who preſides

* It is obſervable that ſhe is there called *madame* de Maintenon; according to the ſtile of chancery ſhe ſhould have been called the *lady* of Maintenon.

over

over this holy community, with this legend :

C. C. C. Puellæ nobiles Sancirianæ. *

The king neglected no ceremony, no act of kindneſs which could give encouragement to the houſe for the preſent, or diſtinction for the future. He went to Noiſy, and there in the preſence of the whole community, ſpoke thus to madame de Brinon ; 'I do not doubt your judg-'ment, madam, and your candour in 'chooſing proper perſons to compoſe this 'new inſtitution ; it was undertaken only 'for the glory of God, and the relief of 'my nobleſſe. My motives in founding 'it were pure and diſintereſted, let it be 'governed by the ſame.'

Madame de Maintenon taking counſel only of her eſteem, her gratitude and the preſent ſtate of Saint-Cyr, made madame de Brinon perpetual ſuperiour. In her favour ſhe broke through an article in the edict of creation, by which it is required that the ſuperiour ſhould be elected by the community, and changed once in three years. The youth of the perſons who formed the new inſtitution, ſeemed

* A round number was named, becauſe, tho' there were but 250 young ladies, there were 36 profeſt, moſt of them ſo young, that the word *Puellæ* ſuited them.

to juſtify the diſtinction ſhe had made; but it is dangerous to ſet aſide regulations on any occaſion, it is more ſo, when they relate to eſſential matters, and the worſt conſequences may be apprehended when this is done in the beginning of an eſtabliſhment: madame de Maintenon was convinced of this truth too late.

CHAPTER X.

The firſt Regulations.

PLACES in Saint-Cyr were ſolicited with the greateſt ardor from the moſt diſtant parts of the kingdom, and proofs of noble deſcent were ſought for with the utmoſt diligence and exactneſs. Already more than a hundred young ladies had given in their certificates of four deſcents from nobleſſe, till the proofs they were obliged to produce could be finiſhed: many of them produced eighteen deſcents. Madame de Maintenon did not require theſe proofs of thoſe who were already at Noiſy, but ſhe was extremely exact with regard to all who afterwards were received into Saint-Cyr. Among the crowd of candidates ſhe always preferred thoſe who were moſt diſtreſſed, and leaſt recommended.

She

She required that the candidates ſhould produce a certificate of their poverty, ſigned by the biſhop of their dioceſe, or by his grand vicars. This regulation is often eluded: a gentleman is always conſidered as poor: perhaps the ſenſe of the word *poverty* is yet to be determined: benefactions deſtined for the uſe of the indigent nobleſſe, ought not to be the prey of avaritious wealth.

It was alſo ſettled, that the young ladies ſhould be viſited and examined before they were admitted, and ſuch as were found to have any defect either of body or mind, ſhould be rejected: an excellent precaution, by which the effects of contagious faults of conſtitution and temper are prevented. Compaſſion condemned it at firſt, a more reaſonable compaſſion approved it.

The king deſirous to give this community every mark of honour and diſtinction, permitted it his liveries for ever. It now wanted nothing but a coat of arms. Madame de Maintenon propoſed a croſs lowered, with a royal crown over it, ſtrewed at the three ends with flowers de lis.

The young ladies were dreſſed uniformly. They wore a gown and petticoat of brown crape of Mans. In ſummer their

under petticoats were of raw linen, in winter red bays, their head-dreſs was a white quilted cap, with ſeveral rows of plaits before, and tied up with ribbons of the ſame colour with the claſs they belonged to.

They were now removed from Noiſy. The ladies and novices came firſt to Saint-Cyr. They were preceeded by the corps of Saint Candide, attended by eccleſiaſtics, who depoſited it in the church with all the veneration due to the relicks of holy martyrs.

On the day of the tranſlation, the community was compleat, except the profeſt, to whom ſome ladies of eminent virtue were joined.

When they entered their ſeveral apartments, they found them compleatly furniſhed, every thing new, ſimple, yet in an elegant taſte. This aſtoniſhing order, amidſt ſo great a variety, ſeemed to partake of the fabulous deſcriptions in romances. They thought themſelves in an inchanted palace, they were never ſatisfied with ſeeing and admiring ſo many new yet uniform beauties.

The king afterwards appointed a council to examine every year the affairs, and ſettle

tle the accounts of the houſe, and madame de Maintenon appointed Manſeau, who ſerved her as equerry and ſteward, and who was a man of great experience and integrity, to ſuperintend the expences of the houſe.

CHAPTER XI.

Madame de Brinon.

SAINT-Cyr became ſoon a ſource of diſguſt and uneaſineſs to madame de Maintenon. Great good was done there, but great faults were committed. The young ladies were educated with care, but the profeſt were weakly conducted. The ſuperiour poſſeſſed every talent but that of governing well. Madame de Brinon knew the world, ſhe had ſtudied the fathers of the church, the poets, but ſhe knew only the theory of her ſtation. Her temper was unequal, raſh, imperious, prodigal, emulous of fame, and greedy of riches.

Madame de Maintenon thought ſhe had been cured of her failings, and the ſolid wiſdom ſhe diſplayed in her converſation, gave her a high idea of the greatneſs of her mind, and her capacity for the

government of a religious community. She loaded her with honours, which inſtead of binding her to the new inſtitution, leſſened her attention to it, by giving her a taſte for the world. In the choice of novices madame de Brinon would be directed by prejudices very dangerous for the houſe: among thoſe who offered themſelves, ſhe always fixed upon ſuch as had the good fortune to pleaſe her, and ſhe was very ſubject to unjuſt averſions. Madame de Maintenon expected that the ſuperiour of a community ſhould be wholly diſintereſted.

Manſeau had orders to reſtrain the laviſh diſpoſition of madame de Brinon, and to correct ſuch little errors as were committed through her caprices: thus the ſuperior was controled without knowing ſhe was ſo.

Confined now to ſpiritual affairs, ſhe inſtructed the profeſt and the novices every day in the duties of religion, and on Sundays ſhe gave them lectures upon the epiſtles and the goſpels, in which her eloquence was ſo much admired, that even foreigners came to the grate of the choir to hear her.

Madame de Maintenon treated her with the higheſt reſpect, ſhe was continualy

tinually loading her with preſents, prevented even her wiſhes, nothing was omitted that could give her conſequence: ſhe was conſidered as a kind of favourite at court, the king never went to Saint-Cyr, without ſhewing the kindeſt attention to the ſuperiour; her reputation increaſed, and her poſt became a dignity to be envied by ladies of the moſt illuſtrious families who had devoted themſelves to a religious life; ſhe was looked upon as a moſt extraordinary genius; people came from all parts to hear her lectures, which were called expoſitions of the goſpels; the courtiers maintained, that in eloquence ſhe equalled Bourdaloue; the eccleſiaſtics were jealous of her abilities and her fame; they diſapproved of the benediction ſhe gave the community with the air of a biſhop, and ſhe diſcontinued it.

Although ſhe found ſufficient employment in ſpiritual affairs, yet ſhe was offended at being diſpenſed with in temporals, and diſcovered that ſhe was ſo: her furniture, her manners, her ſentiments were more ſuitable to an abbeſs than a nun, who ought to govern by the force of example. The king one day making a viſit to Saint-Cyr, whiſpered ſome words in her ear: this familiarity almoſt turned her head, ſhe now treated the la-

dies with inſolence, and they never approached her without trembling.

Madame de Maintenon made ſeveral uſeful regulations, in which ſhe always conſulted madame de Brinon, but their ſentiments were generally very different. In one was ſeen an exalted mind, an humble deportment, a prudent economy, great attention to the education of the young ladies, that inward recollection ſo neceſſary to all chriſtians, and that affability which made her regarded by the community as its common mother. In the other appeared a thouſand ſhining qualities, but mixed with great pride and boundleſs vanity, a haughty reſerve which made it difficult to get acceſs to her, and which rendered her ſociety diſagreeable, a propenſity to pleaſure, a taſte for vanity, a violent paſſion for novelties of all kinds. This oppoſition of character laid the ladies of Saint-Cyr under great reſtraint, who were equally deſirous to pleaſe her who had inſtituted, and her who governed them.

Madame de Maintenon finding herſelf perpetually contradicted by madame de Brinon, declared her ſentiments freely to ſome of her friends upon the inconveniences that muſt neceſſarily ariſe from this conflict of authority: ſhe would have abandoned her work if charity had permitted her.

her. Madame de Brinon in every debate took advantage of her title of ſuperiour, and the rights annexed to that title by the regulations of the community. Madame de Maintenon was too modeſt to ſpeak of her own, and too gentle to enforce them. In order to give more weight to her advice, ſhe went every day to Saint-Cyr to conjure the ſuperiour to do what ſhe was intitled to expect from her obedience

Madame de Brinon having been accuſtomed to a life of freedom, with difficulty ſubmitted to the regularity of a cloiſter, which the preſence of madame de Maintenon obliged her to. Yet ſhe was every day more eſteemed by the court. The princeſſes, the miniſters, the cardinals were her friends, her friendſhip courted, and almoſt her protection ſolicited. Madame de Maintenon authoriſed the reſpect of the publick for her. At church, in the garden, in the refectory, ſhe always gave her precedence, which madame de Brinon accepted with a careleſneſs that aſtoniſhed all who obſerved it.

Saint-Cyr ſeemed to be the reſidence of peace and joy, yet diſcord was there: madame de Brinon had ſet one part of the community againſt the other. The profeſst complained to madame de Maintenon, who was greatly ſhocked, but deferred till another time an anſwer to

their complaints: when the court went to Fontainbleau, ſhe took meaſures for maintaining good order in the community during her abſence.

Madame de Brinon, was ſeized with a dangerous illneſs: madame de Maintenon forgot all her faults, and was greatly afflicted: ſhe ſent Fagon to her, and ſettled couriers upon the road to inform her every hour of the ſtate of her health: when ſhe was a little recovered the king made her a viſit: this favour compleated her intoxication, and drew on her ruin: her health returned, and with it her caprice and her inſolence.

Her conduct grew inſupportable, ſome eccleſiaticks of diſtinction were deputed to her. The biſhop of Chartres was at length ſent to Saint-Cyr. She could not be perſuaded to alter her ſentiments, and always objected the regulations. Madame de Maintenon tired out with her obſtinacy, was upon the point of leaving all to her management, but her confeſſors remonſtrated to her that all would be loſt: they allowed that madame de Brinon was wiſe, learned, eloquent and better qualified to inſtruct the community than any other perſon, but that ſhe loved power, liberty and grandeur more than ſuited her ſtate: madame de Maintenon was prevailed

vailed upon to continue her cares, ſtill ſoothing madame de Brinon with all thoſe little attentions which ſhe thought could give her pleaſure, and carefully avoiding every thing that could offend her.

Madame de Brinon under pretence of ill health, went to ſee her relations in the Vexin, and ſhewed the ladies of Saint-Lewis that they were capable of governing themſelves.

At her return, ſhe declared that her fat and her florid complexion were not natural, and that the waters of Bourbon could alone reſtore her to a good ſtate of health. She would not wait for a regular permiſſion from the biſhop, but ſet out for Paris with mademoiſelle de Blair her neice. In Bourbonnois, extraordinary honours were paid her: ſhe had two coaches of her own, and often four in her train: ſhe was preceded by a man who had the care of preparing her lodgings: the great towns ſent deputations to compliment her: the villages were under arms: at church her knees always reſted upon a cuſhion of velvet. Theſe honours which madame de Maintenon received with a graceful confuſion, madame de Brinon ſupported with an air as majeſtick, as if ſhe had been born to a throne.

During

During her ſtay at Bourbon ſhe ingroſſed all the homage, regulated all the amuſements: every one was ſolicitous to pleaſe her: entertainments were made for her, rich gifts preſented to her, petitions humbly offered. The nobleſt families in the province accompanied her. The court was informed of every particular relating to this pompous journey, and laughed at it: the king was ſhocked, and madame de Maintenon, upon whom all the ridicule of this conduct fell, regretted it in ſilence.

In the mean time, all was peace at Saint-Cyr, the moſt exact order was eſtabliſhed, the rules of a cloiſtral life more ſtrictly obſerved, the ladies entered into their ſeveral employments, and madame de Maintenon directed them. Her departure for Fontainbleau interrupted their joy, each of the young ladies wept as if ſhe had loſt her mother, however the regulations were obeyed with ſuch exactneſs, and peace ſo ſolidly eſtabliſhed, that throughout the whole community nothing was ſeen but chearful piety, decent freedom and holy friendſhip. The return of Madame de Brinon which was daily expected, was all they wanted to compleat their happineſs.

Madame

Madame de Brinon after ſtaying at Bourbon ſix weeks, and fifteen days with her relations, ſated with the adoration of all the nobility of the country, at length arrived at Fontainbleau, where the court was to continue for ſome days longer, and alighted at the hotel des Fermes. Madame de Maintenon ſent to deſire ſhe would dine with her, and preſented her to the king, who received her with great complaiſance: the next day ſhe went to Paris, where ſhe ſtaid a few days to recover the fatigue of her journey. Marly was juſt then finiſhed, as was Trianon likewiſe, which had been demoliſhed to be rebuilt with the beauty and magnificence it now appears in. This place was the ſeat of pleaſure for the king: he ſettled a private houſhold there, under the direction of Bontems: novelty made theſe houſes of pleaſure agreeable to the whole court.

There it was that Lewis would diveſt himſelf of majeſty to introduce as much freedom as the preſence of a king could admit of.

Madame de Brinon intoxicated with her favour at court, thought herſelf intitled to part of that reſpect which was paid by Bontems to madame de Maintenon, and wrote to acquaint him that ſhe

intended to ſee Marly: that ſhe expected he would give proper orders for her reception, and that after having dined at Marly ſhe would viſit Trianon.

This ſtyle aſtoniſhed Bontems, it was what the dauphin himſelf did not venture to aſſume, however the time preſſed, Bontems the moſt exact and regular of men not being able to receive the king's orders upon this occaſion, obeyed thoſe of madame de Brinon, uncertain whether madame de Maintenon would approve of this ſtep, but very ſure that ſhe could excuſe it to the king. All the ſervants were found ready at their poſts, and madame de Brinon was ſerved at dinner by the officers of the king, in the ſame manner as madame de Maintenon or the queen. Bontems did the honours there, as well as at Trianon, whither ſhe afterwards went.

The next day, the behaviour of *madame* the ſuperiour was the only ſubject of converſation at Fontainbleau: madame de Maintenon laughed as well as the reſt, and ſaid that a nun could not know the conſequence of ſuch liberties, and that no permiſſion had been aſked for the entertainment that was made for her.

Madame de Brinon when ſhe returned to Saint-Cyr, diſapproved of every thing that

that had been done, but particularly with what madame de Maintenon had directed: ſhe wrote to her at Fontainbleau, and with ſuch warmth that ſhe told her in her letters, that every accident, which had happened, and all the ſickneſs at preſent in the community had been occaſioned by the regulations eſtabliſhed during her abſence.

Madame de Maintenon weary of theſe repeated inſults, began at length to think ſeriouſly of delivering her community from a ſpirit ſo reſtleſs and a heart ſo ungrateful. She conſulted the wiſeſt and moſt candid among her friends: they all adviſed her to remove madame de Brinon from Saint-Cyr. She could not without great concern tear herſelf from a perſon whom ſhe had loved with ſo much tenderneſs, 'but when the publick good is 'in queſtion, ſaid ſhe, we ought chear-'fully to ſacrifice our private affections.' The abilities of madame de Brinon were neceſſary for the beginning of an eſtabliſhment: to fix and confirm it, virtues were ſtill more ſo.

Mean time the gentleſt methods were uſed to gain her, but the ſuperiour was perſuaded that madam de Maintenon would tolerate all ſhe did, and durſt not importune the king with complaints againſt

againſt her, leſt they ſhould reflect upon her own judgment: ſhe had likewiſe a great dependence upon the abbé Goblelin, who thought her abſolutely neceſſary to the community, and ſupported by theſe hopes ſhe perſevered in all her errors. Madame de Maintenon now treated her with leſs familiarity and kindneſs: madame de Brinon laid the blame of this alteration in her behaviour upon the ladies of Saint-Lewis: ſhe ſuſpected that during her abſence they had complained of her to madame de Maintenon, and many expreſſions of the deepeſt reſentment eſcaped her.

CHAPTER XII.

Madame de Brinon *is removed from Saint* Cyr.

1688. TOWARDS the end of October the court returned to Verſailles: madame de Brinon who had no ſuſpicion of her approaching misfortune, was ſuffered to govern the community as ſhe pleaſed, becauſe it was determined ſhe ſhould not govern it long. Madame de Maintenon told the king all that ſhe had carefully concealed from him, candidly owned that ſhe had been miſtaken, repreſented

ſented to him, that after her death Saint-Cyr would be the abode of pride, faction and cabal, and that the dangerous example of a perpetual ſuperiour in madame de Brinon, would hereafter inſpire ſome ambitious member of the community who might ſucceed her with an inclination to protract her authority beyond the limited time. The king replied, 'I told you, 'madame, that it was wrong, to violate 'the laws in favour of madame de Brinon.'

The marchioneſs de Montchevreuil, the intimate friend of madame de Brinon, was ſent to her with a letter de cachet, containing an order to quit the houſe at a certain hour the next day: ſhe was charged alſo with a meſſage from the biſhop, requiring her obedience to that order, and a diſcharge from the ſuperiority. The marchioneſs viſited madame de Brinon in her apartment, and after a good deal of preparation pronounced her ſentence.

Madame de Brinon who was firmly perſuaded that the friendſhip and eſteem of madame de Maintenon for her was unalterable, heard this news with an aſtoniſhment that kept her motionleſs for ſome minutes. She wept, ſhe complained, but growing calmer, ſhe intreated the marchioneſs not to mention her misfortune to any perſon in the community: ſhe even con-

concealed it from her women, and cauſing her apartment to be ſhut up, ſhe employed the reſt of the day in packing up her cloaths with an air of ſolicitude and chearfulneſs. Madame de Montchevreuil aſſured her that the community would allow her a penſion of two thouſand livres a year. 'What is that, ſhe replied, to the 'value of my place?'

The next day the lady portreſs ſeeing her going, cried: 'Ah! madame, then 'you are going to take another journey, 'and we have not had time to grieve, 'becauſe we have been ignorant of your 'deſign.' Madame de Brinon embraced her, and told her ſhe would not be long abſent: ſhe ordered her coachman to carry her to the hotel de Guiſe in Paris, and ſent in her name to the dutcheſs of Hanover who was there, with whom ſhe had ſome connexion. That princeſs was delighted with her good fortune, in having a viſit from a perſon of the dignity, the merit, and great conſideration of madame de Brinon, and came immediately with the princeſſes her daughters to receive her. *

Madame

* I am going to tell you a piece of news which will ſurpriſe you. Madame de Brinon the ſoul of Saint-Cyr, the intimate friend of madame de Maintenon is no longer

Madame de Maintenon gave out that ill health, old age, and a fondneſs for ſolitude had induced madame de Brinon to retire from Saint-Cyr. The ladies of Saint-Lewis rejoiced at it, but the young ladies wept exceſſively. The day after the ſuperiour's departure madame de Maintenon went to Saint-Cyr, and aſſembling the community thus ſpoke to them.

'The great progreſs you have made in 'piety, has determined me to eſtabliſh 'in this houſe thoſe ſtrict rules, which 'you deſire with ſuch ardour yourſelves. 'I feared, and you are convinced my 'fears were but too well grounded, that 'madame de Brinon would not enter

longer ſuperiour of the community: ſhe left Saint-Cyr four days ago, and is now at the hotel de Guiſe: ſhe does not ſeem to be upon ill terms with madame de Maintenon, for ſhe ſends every day to enquire after her health: this increaſes the curioſity of the publick to know the cauſe of her diſgrace. Sevigné's letters December 10, 1688.

All I know yet concerning madame de Brinon is that the king has given her a penſion of two thouſand livres a year. They ſay that ſhe intends to go to Saint-Antoine, ſhe preached extremely well, and that you know, there is the good Gobelin in her place, who to fill it, and that which he has already, will be obliged to preach all day. Sevigné's letters, December 13, 1688.

'with

'enter with zeal enough into this deſign. 'I have not been able to remove her 'without doing great violence to my-'ſelf: I eſteem her, I love her ſtill, I am 'grieved that I no longer ſee her amongſt 'you, but when your happineſs was in 'danger, I balanced no more, and I 'ſhall be always ready to ſacrifice to it 'my inclinations and my friends. Every 'one is greateſt in their own particular 'talents: your ſuperiour was admirable 'for forming wiſe regulations, but ſhe 'has not appeared to the king to be 'proper for maintaining the obſervance 'of them. Beſides I am deſirous of ſee-'ing while I am yet alive, how this houſe 'will be governed by a ſuperiour drawn 'from its own boſom: madame de Bri-'non accuſtomed to uncontroled domi-'nion, would have oppoſed this trial: 'I was willing to ſpare you my children 'the inconveniencies of a perpetual ſu-'periour, and madame de Brinon the mor-'tification of an equal.'

The whole community ſubmitted without murmuring to the government of madame de Loubert, who had been next in authority to madame de Brinon, and whoſe gentleneſs, prudence and humility repaired and obliterated the errors of her whom ſhe ſucceeded.

Madame

Madame de Brinon who did not know that madame de Maintenon, although ſhe was the tendereſt, the moſt compaſſionate of women, was alſo the moſt firm, declared her ſituation to the dutcheſs of Hanover, who in repeated letters ſolicited her to reſtore madame de Brinon to her place. Madame de Maintenon was ſo far from yielding to the intreaties of the princeſs, that ſhe required of madame de Brinon a reſignation in form, which the other inſtantly complied with.* Finding her ſentence irrevocable, and obſerving the kindneſs of the dutcheſs of Hanover to be daily decreaſing, ſhe attempted to retire into ſome convent at Paris, but all proving inſupportable ſhe went to Maubuiſſon, where ſhe ſettled herſelf more agreeably, and without any dependence upon the community. She there entered into a tender correſpondence with madame de Maintenon, who by a thouſand inſtances of reſpect and eſteem conſoled her for her diſgrace. She died at Maubuiſſon, regretting the world, Saint-Cyr and life.

Madame de Maintenon no longer oppoſed by inſolent authority, made regulations more uſeful and more ſtrict, notwithſtanding the murmurs of ſome who had favoured the views of the late ſuperiour. The houſe now enjoyed a calm,

* This reſignation is dated December 11. 1688.

which

which till then it had known only in idae: madame de Maintenon went thither every day: madame de la Maiſonfort, who from her infancy had been canoneſs of Pouſſay was received into it: ſhe was greatly reſpected at court, and had all that fervor of devotion which perſons generally have who by great afflictions are called to God. The king had given her lands worth two thouſand crowns a year: ſhe had refuſed ſeveral advantageous matches, and equalled madame de Brinon in wit and in obſtinacy, but ſurpaſſed her in virtue.

CHAPTER XIII.

The utility of Saint-Cyr.

SAINT-Cyr was from its beginning expoſed to calumny. The king often went there and with very few attendants. It was therefore reported that madame de Maintenon had founded this community with a deſign to diſingage him from the marchioneſs de Monteſpan, and in the view of ſo many young beauties, improved by a liberal education, offer him pleaſures well calculated to awaken the paſſions of a man acuſtomed to all, and with all diſguſted.

Although

Although this conjecture ſhould not be refuted by the conduct and character of madame de Maintenon, ſo uniformly, and ſteadily maintained during her whole life, it would be by the date of theſe two events: madame de Monteſpan was quitted for ever in 1680, and Saint-Cyr was not built till 1686.

The publick ventured to report what it durſt not even believe, for was it poſſible to believe that Saint-Cyr was a ſeraglio for the king? however we may read in more than twenty volumes, that the duke de Roquelaure married mademoiſelle de Laval, who was educated at Saint-Cyr, and ſo much beloved by the king that he created her huſband a duke and Peer of France. An abſurd and ridiculous calumny, mademoiſelle de Laval was never at Saint-Cyr. She was maid of honour in 1680 to the princeſs of Bavaria, firſt wife to the dauphin, and married Biran duke de Roquelaure in 1683, three years before Saint-Cyr was founded.

Was madame de Maintenon, it will be aſked, acquainted with theſe ſhocking ſlanders? Yes, ſhe knew them, and deſpiſed them. They fell inſenſibly, and never gained any credit, but in foreign countries, where they were at laſt depoſited in the meaneſt and moſt ridiculous

of libels, intitled. *The amours of madame de Maintenon.* * There Lewis XIV. was repreſented, entring Saint-Cyr, a hundred beauties paſſing in review before him, throwing his handkerchief to the faireſt, and attending the laſt evening prayers to expiate this ſin, like that prince who every day debauched a nun, and had his confeſſor waiting at the door to abſolve him.

Madame de Maintenon's enemies were enraged at the fame ſhe acquired by this foundation; moſt of them attributed to prudential views, a work which charity only had ſuggeſted. It was an aſylum they ſaid which ſhe ſecured to herſelf, if ſhe ſhould happen to be diſgraced at court. The diſtribution of places made her friends and dependants: ſhe effaced the ſtains of her paſt conduct by giving herſelf the merit of a foundreſs: ſhe could not be queen, ſhe would at leaſt be a Saint: and a thouſand other abſurd cenſures were propagated, which none but weak and wicked minds could think probable.

Madame de Maintenon could only fall by the death of the king, and even in that fall ſhe muſt neceſſarily be ſtill great:

* Printed in Holland by Peter Marteau, in the year 1694.

ſhe

ſhe was ſo little ſolicitous to conciliate the friendſhip of particular families, that ſhe left to father de la Chaiſe the nomination of the young ladies, as well to avoid the acknowledgments due to ſuch a benefit, as the murmurs which a refuſal always occcaſioned: ſure of the rectitude of her intentions, doubtful of her judgment.

Such as could neither miſtake the motives, nor blame the execution of the ſcheme attacked the ſolidity of it. 'Much better 'inſtitutions ſay they have degenerated, and 'Saint-Cyr which now that we are all 'religious, is the reſidence of virtue and 'piety, may, without looking too far for-'ward, be the receptacle of impiety and 'vice: for can it be ſuppoſed that three 'hundred young girls in the neighbour-'hood of a gay and voluptuous court 'ſhould eſcape ſeduction, eſpecially when 'the king's authority does not enforce 'the obſervation of the rules? It is not 'reaſonable to believe that young men 'and young women can be ſo near each 'other, without thinking ill, and prac-'tiſing it likewiſe.'

Such is the opinion of madame de la Fayette; and thus it is that the beſt eſtabliſhments are always condemned among the French: one would imagine that it is the particular character of our nation, to

love publick charities, to desire them with ardor, and to blame them when they are founded. Lewis XIV. has done greater things than the hospital for Invalids, and the community of Saint-Cyr but he has ever done better.

His successor has imitated his benevolence, by founding that military school, in which five hundred noble youths learn the trade of heroes at the expence of idleness and luxury.

Madame de Maintenon formed the scheme herself, she consulted only her own heart, and did not know till after it was executed that the great Ximenés, had formed such another in Spain.

The immortal rector of Saint-Sulpice to whom Paris owes so many benefits, which Paris has so ill acknowledged, has copied in little, the establishment of Saint-Cyr, by founding the community of the Infant Jesus, in which thirty young girls of condition are educated in virtue and piety.

Ximenés, Lewis the fourteenth, Maintenon, Lewis the fifteenth, Languet, all the exalted souls of every age, and every rank, resemble each other, have the same ideas of publick good, and seem instinctively to pursue the same end.

It

It has been often propoſed, that Saint-Cyr ſhould ſend colonies into the provinces, that the nobleſſe might be more generally relieved. Madame de Maintenon's plan cannot be too much extended. The ſtate countries* would readily aſſiſt an eſtabliſhment ſo uſeful, and funds might be raiſed upon church lands, which by being thus applied would fulfil the intentions of the donors.

The woman, who now ſo gloriouſly ſhares the throne of Chriſtina, thought ſhe could not give Sweden a more convincing proof of her affection for the nobility, than by projecting a foundation upon the model of Saint-Cyr. She conſidered the plan of it with emulation, and renounced it with regret: her revenues had bounds, her charity knew none; however ſhe has done all that could be performed by the wife of a king, who is perpetually reſtrained by his ſenate, and controled by the ſtates of his kingdom.

How happy then are the French! there is no eſtabliſhment which better deſerves the protection of the prince than that of Saint-Cyr. This Lewis well knew, he who entered like a father into all its neceſſities, and provided like a king for all its expences. Too jealous of the foun-

* The ſtate countries are the provinces where impoſts are appointed by the aſſembly of the ſtates.

dation to ſhare the glory of it with any of his ſubjects, he decreed that it ſhould receive no benefactions but from the kings and queens of France. To ſovereigns only it belongs to relieve the nobleſſe, who daily ſacrifice their lives for their ſervice: he did not doubt but that his ſucceſſors would compleat a work he had ſo happily begun: he foreſaw that the piety of our queens would make them take delight in improving, maintaining, and extending an eſtabliſhment, of which more than twelve hundred families have already found the utility.

Madame de Maintenon had no fears concerning the duration of a work, which taking in the whole ſyſtem of the ſtate, intereſted every citizen in its proſperity. She deſigned to have enlarged the incloſure, to have built a country-houſe for it in a purer air, to have endowed it with revenues ſufficient for removing the inconveniencies occaſioned by the badneſs of the air, and the overflowing of the waters, that her children might acquire that ſtrong and vigorous complexion, equally neceſſary in the world, and in the cloiſter, the diſorders of the finances and the neceſſities of the ſtate did not permit her to aſk the king for benefactions reſerved for peace and his poſterity.

The

The ſucceſſor of Lewis the fourteenth has not diſappointed his hopes: he has been liberal in his gifts to a houſe ſo dear to our kings, and ſo uſeful to their people. A ſum of eighty thouſand livres* has been lately appropriated to the building of an aqueduct for cleaning the cellars in the building, and carrying off the the water with which they were overflowed.

Moſt of the young ladies devote themſelves to a religious life: one day all the claſs had a vocation for the veil, through the perſuaſions of a director who thought there could be no ſalvation out of a cloiſter: madame de Maintenon was greatly perplexed, ſhe would not blame the biſhop, but ſays the author whoſe memoirs I copy, 'I ſaw what paſſed in her 'heart.'

She had formed a deſign of taking from each abbey, to which the king had the right of nomination, the portion of a profeſt nun, to be beſtowed by Saint-Cyr, on thoſe who quitted the community. This regulation would have facilitated the marriages of the young ladies: while madame de Maintenon lived, their alliance was greatly ſolicited; the huſband of a young lady of Saint-Cyr never failed to be promoted to great employments, they became ſar-

* I wrote this in 1753.

mers general, governors, lieutenants-governors: the ladies educated with the niceſt care, made them happy in their virtues, and laid at leaſt the foundation of their fortune.

It was with this view that the king added ſixty thouſand livres a year to the foundation, and this ſum is wholly appropriated to portioning the young ladies, who all when they quit the community have a thouſand crowns: this ſum at preſent is not all paid, becauſe a great number entering the community at eleven years of age, there are above twenty who leave it every year.

CHAPTER XIV.

*The education at Saint-*Cyr.

THE method of education at Saint-Cyr, may be a model for all public colleges. The exerciſes are there diſtributed with judgment. The young ladies riſe at ſix o'clock, hear maſs at eight, breakfaſt at nine, dine at eleven, they read by turns during dinner time, are allowed to play and divert themſelves till one, and work till ſix, when the whole community goes to ſupper. They are only permitted to go into the parlour, during fifteen

teen days at the close of each quarter, lest the too great number of visitors should interrupt their studies.

They are placed in classes, and these subdivided into little companies: all are taught with gentleness, all observed with attention, the honour and pleasure of behaving well expresst by a ribbon which distinguishes the most meritorious, is all their reward, shame almost the only punishment. They are taught to practise virtue; they are inspired with a love for it; the genius of each is consulted; they force not nature, but direct and improve it. All that they read, hear, or see tends to inspire them with sentiments becoming their birth, and suitable to their station. They are instructed in ancient and modern history, geography, musick and drawing. Their style is formed by little compositions; their memory carefully cultivated; provincial pronunciations corrected; they give modesty, simplicity, gracefulness to their manners; their studies are regulated by the particular taste and propensity of each scholar, and as their labour is continued throughout the whole day, and all even to amusement is instruction, they soften the fatigue of such incessant application by variety, and the days slide rapidly away without languor or satiety.

In Saint-Cyr none of thoſe preferences are allowed which introduce diſcord and malevolence in ſchools, which make ſome hated, and which give diſguſt to others; none of thoſe familiarities, which by violating the laws of decorum deſtroy the moſt tender friendſhip. Their talents are cultivated, their beauty blooms without care; they are not taught how to pleaſe, but to think of God, to love him, and to ſerve him. Their minds are not contracted by inforcing the neceſſity of minute acts of devotion, but filled with noble principles, with chriſtian and with moral virtues.

All imaginable care is taken to preſerve their health, and when they are ſick, ſuch tender ſolicitude, ſuch exact attention is ſhewn them, as leave them no cauſe to neglect the paternal houſe, and make them love their infirmary.

The ladies fulfil their vow of inſtruction with extreme application and ſuperiour capacity. In no other religious houſe can be found ſo much piety, wit and ſolid ſenſe united: qualities due to madame de Maintenon, who, to inſtruct the miſtreſſes of the claſſes in their duty, ſubmitted to become one herſelf, and during two years, regularly performed all the offices of one. From that time the moſt exact

exact order has been conſtantly maintained, and two hundred and fifty young ladies are governed by the claſſes of black and flame-coloured ribbons.

What has greatly contributed to perpetuate the ſyſtem of education eſtabliſhed by madame de Maintenon in this community, is its happineſs in being always well governed; a happineſs it owes intirely to its foundreſs, who in the election to all the dignities of the houſe, decreed that the votes ſhould be entirely free. All the ſuperiour employments are well filled, becauſe thoſe who obey are worthy to command, and thoſe who command are ready to obey. Madame de Mornai the granddaughter of the Marquis de Montchevreuil, the laſt ſuperiour, poſſeſſed all the virtues of her ſtation, and all the talents neceſſary for her place. She was ſucceeded by madame du Han the preſent ſuperiour: the qualities of one lady of Saint-Lewis are the qualities of all.

Mademoiſelle d'Aubigné was educated there: mademoiſelle de Blois lived there for ſome weeks, and received confirmation there: the mother of the preſent king, while yet a child, paſſed every tueſday and wedneſday at Saint-Cyr, and always came out more amiable.

A German princeſs of the Palatine's family called the princeſs of Veldens, was ruined in the deſolation of the Palatinate. She knew that if Lewis XIV had a miniſter whoſe temper was cruel, and who always gave the harſheſt counſels, that there was alſo a woman in his court whoſe ſoul was acceſſible to pity, and who loved to relieve the unhappy. This princeſs came to France with two of her daughters, and travelled part of the way on foot. She brought with her proofs of her being related to the dauphineſs.

Madame de Maintenon received and treated them with the reſpect, that was ſuitable to their rank and the tenderneſs due to their misfortunes. The youngeſt daughter of this princeſs, who was called the princeſs Chriſtina, deſired to be received into the community of Saint Cyr: ſhe took the habit of the green claſs, and died a nun there. The mother had a penſion, and this ſpeech from the mouth of the king: 'There is nothing, madame, 'but the pleaſure of doing you ſervice 'myſelf, that can ſoften my regret for 'the diſtreſſes you have ſuffered unknown 'to me.'

Here, Manſeau interrupting his recital, exclaims, 'How many charitable actions 'might I relate if madame de Maintenon 'had

'had not buried them in oblivion; ſome 'by doing them privately herſelf; others 'by commanding me never to diſcloſe 'them! How many children, widows, 'how many whole families have been re-'lieved by her! how many young wo-'men reclaimed from vice! how many 'officers indemnified for the refuſals they 'ſuffered from the miniſters! I ſhould 'never come to an end, were I permitted 'to reveal all I know; but God will not 'ſuffer ſo many good works to be hid, nor 'let the world want the edification of ſo 'glorious an example: hiſtory will pre-'ſerve ſome of the virtues of this inimi-'table lady; it will declare to poſterity, 'that ſhe made uſe of her influence over 'the king, only to engage him to relieve 'the poor, that ſhe never thought of 'herſelf; that the veneration of Lewis 'the great for her increaſed every day. 'It will diſcloſe that virtue which I can 'only admire, nor will her affection for 'Saint-Cyr remain unnoticed, nor the 'good ſhe did there be forgot.' Here is at leaſt one lady beloved and eſteemed by her ſervants.

Saint-Cyr was her only paſſion; ſhe would often be there at ſix o'clock in the morning, that ſhe might be preſent at the riſing of the young ladies: would aſſiſt in combing their hair, ſhe would dreſs them herſelf.

ſelf. She would attend one claſs through the whole day, to obſerve if there was any thing to be corrected, and continue this aſſiduity till it was perfect. Nothing ſeemed laborious, tedious, or dull, that could be advantageous to Saint-Cyr. Though wholly preſent to any one thing ſhe was engaged in, yet ſhe ſeemed to be in all, and every where. She enobled the meaneſt employments by undertaking them herſelf. Sometimes ſhe would inſtruct the novices, or give leſſons of ſpirituality to the nuns, which ſurpriſed the moſt myſtical. Sometimes in the Offices ſhe recommended diligence to the lay-ſiſters by her own example. One day, as ſhe was going out of the kitchen to attend a great ceremony, 'Madame,' ſaid one to her, 'you will not ſmell of muſk.' 'True, 'ſhe replied, but who will ſuppoſe that it 'is I?'

She was particularly ſolicitous to preſerve that purity of manners, by which ſhe wiſhed to ſee her community diſtinguiſhed. Madame de Dangeau happening to praiſe the beauty of one of the ladies, madame de Maintenon did not bring her back for five years to Saint-Cyr. This lady was the only one amongſt them who was very handſome: the marquis de Louvois, when he ſaw them all aſſembled, exclaimed, 'What a prodigious expence to 'maintain

'maintain all these, yet if they were 'handsome, one would not think it too 'much!'

The young ladies were watched with the greatest circumspection, every moment was dedicated to improvment, some of them falling sick through too great application, Dodart, a good physician tho' a jansenist, proposed as a remedy to give them the amusing writings of Port-Royal to read, 'Ah! monsieur, answered ma-'dame de Maintenon, with great emoti-'on, I would rather that they should 'die.'

She required that her adopted daughters should be alike disinterested and frugal; that they should be capable of denying all gratifications to themselves, conformable to their vow, and be liberal in charities agreeable to their duty. One of the rules made by her was, that no collations should be given in the parlour to any person whatsoever. By establishing this law, she lessened the number of visitors, always inconvenient, sometimes dangerous, and at best unprofitable. Were it not for this law, Saint-Cyr would become an inn.

The Count d'Aubigné dining with father Bourdaloue at madame de Maintenon's one day, when the father was to preach

preach at Saint Cyr, 'Do not depend 'upon a collation, father, said he, Saint 'Cyr is the house of God, there is nei- 'ther eating nor drinking there.' 'Per- 'fection, replied madame de Maintenon, 'is not to be expected; instruction is our 'merit, our defect inhospitality.' The poor profited of what the relations of three hundred persons would have devoured without receiving any advantages from it.

Pride, of which Saint Cyr has been so often accused, and at present with so little reason insinuated its dangerous influence among the young ladies. Madame de Maintenon perceived this growing fault, and repress it. The pupils were employed in meaner offices, and not being at liberty to choose their stations, they were taught to despise none. She desired that they might be made diligent and industrious, but not condemned to fatigue; the best lesson was her own example, she never was a moment idle, not even when the king was with her: 'The labour 'of the hands, she often used to say, is the 'penitence God has imposed on sinful 'mortals.

Even her domestics worked at particular trades: in her anti-chamber they were always seen usefully employed. In those of other ladies, the servants were gaming.

Her

Her porter uſed to quit his trade to anſwer with civility importunate ſolicitations. Her viſitors were never introduced by an inſolent and lazy groom of the chamber; all that were in her houſe breathed the love of labour; the poor and the happy, for whom alone her door was opened, to the one through inclination, the other through decency, ſaw, when admitted, the firſt lady of the court, dictating a letter, and turning the ſpindle with an activity that ſeemed to conſole the former for their poverty, and reproach the latter with their perpetual idleneſs.

The indolent dutcheſs will laugh at theſe little circumſtances; the uninſtructive wit will make me ſhare the ridicule he connects with ſuch trifles; the politician enraged to meet with virtues where he flattered himſelf he ſhould find crimes, will throw the book away with contempt: but what ſays that amiable ſage, to whom I would dedicate it? If I were not as well convinced of his exceſſive modeſty as of his partial friendſhip, that man in whom all is noble ſimplicity, who is now ſeen cutting down the trees of Monteſquieu, and now giving laws to the world? Theſe trifles pleaſe him in all women: in the wife of Lewis the fourteenth they will charm him.

Pride

Pride, always mortified, and always resuming new force, shewed itself under the name of dignity of sentiment, 'My children, said madame de Maintenon, be not 'vain-glorious: I am so enough for you.' She blamed herself for all the faults of her adopted daughters, 'We were desirous 'to have wit, said she, and we have made 'orators; devotion, and we have made 'quietists; modesty, and we have made 'prudes; elevated sentiments, and pride 'is carried to excess.'

The young ladies at length became humble by the care that was taken to repress their vanity; they were educated like others, and wit so effectually banished, that a mistress of a class said to madame de Maintenon, 'Be easy, madam, 'the *yellow ribbons* have not common 'sense.'

Her fondness for Saint-Cyr increased every day, the more good she did there, the more she was desirous of doing. Surrounded by all the pleasures of the court, she formed a thousand pretences to quit them. Saint-Cyr relieved her when fatigued with greatness; when oppress with languor, here she always found amusement. She was not apprehensive, that by leaving the king for a few days, she should find him at her return less tender,

tender, or leſs reſpectful: ſhe had not that reſtleſs curioſity which gives terrors, leſt the clew to all affairs ſhould be loſt. She hated the journies to Fontainbleau, becauſe they ſeparated her too long from her family; for ſhe often ſaid, ſhe had no family but Saint-Cyr.

'When, ſays ſhe in a letter to the ſu-'periour, when ſhall I ſee myſelf again 'at that large table, ſurrounded with all 'my daughters, where I am more happy 'than at a royal banquet?' Among all the verſes that were wrote in her praiſe, the four worſt were thoſe that pleaſed her moſt, becauſe ſhe found Saint-Cyr in them.

Elle voit les honeurs avec indifference:
Son cœur de vains deſirs n'eſt jamais
combatu:
Sa maiſon même de plaiſance
Eſt une écôle de vertu.

'With vain deſires her boſom never
beats;
'To vulgar honours ſhe continues cool:
'Her very pleaſure-ſeat
'Is ſacred virtue's ſchool.

ELPHINSTON.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XV.

Eſther. Athaliah. Racine.

ALWAYS attentive to the improvement of her young daughters, ſhe compoſed converſations, which incited them to virtue, corrected their ideas, and gave them a habit of ſpeaking gracefully. Theſe dialogues are extremely fine, the manner is well ſupported, the ſtyle juſt, clear, and elegant, the ſubject diſcuſſed with eaſe and propriety. They have been imitated by madame de Glapion, who came very near her model; and by monſieur Collo, rector of Chevreuſe, who is greatly inferior to it.

The young ladies learned them emulouſly, and repeated them with ſo much intelligence and a grace ſo natural, that they ſeemed to have been converſations that inſtant formed. The king one day paſſing through the gardens of Saint-Cyr, when the community was walking, he deſired them to repeat ſome of thoſe converſations before him, and was extremely pleaſed with them. Thoſe who could not repeat, expreſſed their joy at ſeeing the king by ſinging ſome verſes in his praiſe,

or

or by making him little compliments expreſſive of the ſimplicity of their age.

The ſuperiour had taught them to declaim, and they acted among themſelves the tragedies of Marianne, Polieucte, Alexander and Iphigenia. Madame de Brinon had wrote one herſelf, extremely bad indeed, but compoſed, learned, and acted in fifteen days. They had erected a little theatre in the houſe, madame de Maintenon encouraged theſe amuſements: ſhe thought they inſpired them with virtue, and gave elegance to their manners.

They afterwards acted the tragedy of Andromache, but either becauſe the actreſſes were choſen with great judgment, or that they began to aſſume the manners of the court, which they ſaw from time to time, madame de Maintenon thought this piece but too well repreſented, and was apprehenſive that this amuſement would produce effects contrary to her views. In a letter to Racine ſhe ſays, 'Our little girls have lately acted your 'Andromache, and ſo well, that for the 'future, they will act no pieces but 'yours.' She intreated him to compoſe in his leiſure hours, a kind of moral or hiſtorical Poem, but in the manner of a dialogue. It was abſolutely neceſſary, ſhe told him, that love ſhould have no

place

place in this work, that he need not be circumſcribed by rules, ſince it would remain buried in Saint-Cyr, and that it was ſufficient if it inſtructed and amuſed the children, for whoſe uſe it was deſigned.

Racine was greatly perplexed by this letter, devotion, intereſt, the king, had drawn him from poetry, in which he excelled, to throw him into hiſtory, where probably he painted like a poet, and narrated like a courtier. He was very deſirous of pleaſing madame de Maintenon, and to deny was not in the power of a man, of whom the king had ſaid, when he ſaw him with Cavoye, *Racine wants to appear a courtier, and Cavoye a man of wit.* But he had a great reputation to ſupport, his works had corrected the falſe taſte of the public, and he was terrified at the delicacy he had himſelf introduced.

His maſter Corneille, after quitting the ſcene, appeared on it again only to be hiſſed. Racine, though inferior to him, dreaded a greater fall; on the other ſide, although he had renounced the theatre, he loved it ſtill, the janſeniſts had torn him from it, in ſpite of himſelf; a lady more auſtere, more rigid than they, brought him back to his former inclinations. And when he conſidered the force

force of his genius, he found that it had not been fully diſplayed: he had yet written nothing but Phedra, and Corneille had wrote Rodogune, and Héraclius.

Diſpréaux earneſtly intreated him to reſiſt the demon of poeſy: this demon pleaded with more force and gained the victory. In the hiſtory of Eſther, Racine found every thing that was neceſſary to pleaſe madame de Maintenon without offending Anthony Arnauld: Deſpréaux, when he examined the ſubject, thought it ſo well ſuited to the time and place, that he now exhorted his friend to treat it, and to imitate in a regular performance the chorus of the Greek drama.

Madame de Maintenon was charmed with the firſt act, the hiſtory of Eſther was her own, Moreau compoſed muſic for the chorus: Racine who was as juſt an actor as he was an excellent poet, inſtructed the young ladies, and after many trials found in madame de Caylus an admirable Ahaſuerus; and in madamoiſelle de Glapion a Mordecai, full of fire and expreſſion: mademoiſelle de Veillenne had the part of Eſther which ſuited with the gracefulneſs of her figure: mademoiſelle d'Abancourt had that of Hamman: mademoiſelle de Marſilly that of Zeriſh: and mademoiſelle de la Maiſon-fort, whom the

the king called the agreeable canoneſs, had that of Eliza. A ſplendid theatre was erected in Saint-Cyr; the dreſſes were magnificent, the decorations in the moſt elegant taſte. Berin, decorator of the repreſentations at court, had the management of this. The actreſſes rehearſed their parts twice before the king at Verſailes.

Feb. 8. 1689. At the firſt repreſentation, none but the principal officers who attended the king in hunting were admitted. Racine had made an excellent piece and admirable actreſſes. Madame de Caylus, who ſometimes played the part of mademoiſelle de Saint Oſmane, and ſometimes that of mademoiſelle de Laſtic, appeared with inimitable grace in the character of Piety in the prologue, and afterwards in the part of Ahaſuerus in the play. This innocent company ſeemed formed for thoſe pious ſentiments which has ſince ſhocked us in the mouths of comedians. When an actreſs happened to be out in her part, 'Ah! 'mademoiſelle, cried Racine, the play is 'ruined.'

At ſupper the king could talk of nothing, but Eſther. The dauphine, the duke of Orleans, all the princes deſired to ſee it, and this ſecond repreſentation pleaſed more than the firſt.

The

The prayer of Eſther charmed the whole audience; all was grand, all was managed with dignity; the chorus was abſolutely perfect; the prince ſon to the duke of Orleans was moved even to tears. In the firſt ardour of admiration Eſther was thought ſuperior to Phedra, and the Actreſſes to the Raiſins and the Chammêlés. The king told madame de Maintenon when he came away, that there wanted nothing but the ladies of Saint-Lewis, who, fonder of prayer than of dramatick repreſentations, were moſt of them at church.

The third repreſentation was deſigned for pious perſons only, ſuch as father de la Chaiſe, ſome biſhops, and 12 or 15 jeſuits, with whom came madame de Miramion and her moſt diſtinguiſhed devotees. Madame de Maintenon was deſirous of ſtrengthening her mind againſt the ſcruples which ſhe foreſaw would be raiſed, 'to day, ſaid ſhe, they act only 'for the ſaints.' The ſaints applauded as well as others, and wiſhed that all tragedies were like Eſther.

The king took the courtiers with him, afterwards to ſee Eſther, who heartily admired the piece and the performers. Madame de Maintenon was tiezed with ſolicitations, there was only room for two

hundred ſpectators, and there were two thouſand candidates for places.

A play at a convent became an affair of great importance at court; the ſecretaries of ſtate quitted buſineſs of the utmoſt conſequence to ſee Eſther: the diſgraced miniſters* were after having ſeen it received again into favour. Marſhal d'Eſtrées† who had not applauded it, juſtified himſelf for his ſilence as if it had been a crime: the court was in tumults, it was thought a diſtinguiſhing mark of favour to be permitted to ſee Eſther, and all were emulous of it. The king made a liſt as for the journies to Marly; he entered firſt and ſtood at the door, with the paper in one hand, and with the other holding his cane acroſs as if to form a bar, he continued there till all who were named had entered.

He would not ſuffer any of his train to leave their ſeats, and himſelf gave an example of modeſty and reſerve ſuitable to the place. The lady portreſs was very handſome; the king thanked her for her civility, and no one durſt make her a compliment upon her beauty. The ac-

* Monſieur de Pomponne.

† See Sevignés letters.

treſſes

treſſes, leſs ſolicitous about their own perſons than thoſe they were to repreſent, repeated behind the-ſide ſcenes the *Veni Creator*, to intereſt the Holy-Ghoſt in their ſucceſs.

However they charmed the ſpectators. The duke de Villeroi became paſſio ately in love with madame de Caylus, whoſe huſband was almoſt choaked with admiration and jealouſy: the marquis de Villette, but ill concealed his growing paſſion for mademoiſelle de Marſilly who made him happy, and whom Bolingbroke afterwards rendered ſo unfortunate: mademoiſelle de Choiſeuil had thirty lovers, one of whom became her huſband. The fine large eyes of mademoiſelle de Saint Osmane, her glowing complexion, her inchanting air, excited in every breaſt ſentiments which ſince * * * * * * She was then ſolicitous to pleaſe no one but madame de Maintenon. But mademoiſelle de Glapion, deſtined to deſpiſe the world and to govern Saint-Cyr, entered into her part with ſo much judgment, that the actreſs was forgot, and the audience ſaw only Mordecai.

The king and queen of England were deſirous of ſeeing the new play; the decorations were made more magnificent; the actreſſes were covered with jewels,

and the orcheſtre was formed of the beſt muſicians the king had in his ſervice.

Racine was peculiarly happy in the choice of his ſubject; he imitated the ancients who in their dramatick pieces introduced the events of their own time, Eſther was a repreſentation of the court and the audience, yet without ſtraining incidents drawn from a book too reſpectable to be altered. He pleaſed in ſpite of Ariſtotle's rules, by verſifying, as he ſaid himſelf, thoſe ſcenes which God had drawn.

No poet ever had a more brillant pit. All that Europe had moſt great, Verſailles moſt ingenious, Paris moſt elegant were aſſembled there. He was ſeen upon the theatre with a countenance irradiated with modeſt joy, Deſpréaux at his ſide ſmoothing his ſevere and jealous brow, and enjoying the fame of his friend.

Madame de Monteſpan and the marquis de Louvois confounded in the croud, ſought themſelves with their eyes, and found themſelves upon the ſcene under the names of Vaſhti * and Haman,

* *Sans doute on t'a conté la fameuſe diſgrace*
De l'altiere Vaſhti dont j'occupe la place:

Comment

man, * aſhamed of being ſeen in a place which aimed ſo mortifying a ſtroke at them, bluſhed while they joined in the applauſe. The king and queen of England pleaſed to find the holy father, who had contributed to dethrone them, repreſented as a blind wretch whoſe eyes † the devil had blinded. Lewis a little confuſed at the impious complaint of piety, who pleaded with God the merit of his punctuality,

Comment le roi contre elle enflammé de dépit,
La chaſſa de ſon trône ainſi que de ſon lit.
Mais il n'en peut ſi-tôt effacer la penſée :
Vaſhti regna long-tems dans ſon ame offenſée.

'The dire diſgrace thou doubtleſs has been told
'Of haughty Vaſhti whoſe high place I hold.
'How the great King indignant to have wed
'Debas'd her from his throne and from his bed.
'But o'er his heart he no ſuch conqueſt gain'd:
'Long in that place of torment Vaſhti reign'd.'

E.

* To M. de Louvois was attributed a hint that had given riſe to the verſes:

Il ſçait qu'il me doit tout, &c.

'To me he knows his all is due, *&c.*

E.

† *Et l'enfer couvrant tout de ſes voiles funèbres,*
Sur les yeux les plus ſaints a jetté ſes tenèbres.

'Hell with her diſmal veils o'ercaſting all,
'On holieſt eyes has made her darkneſs fall.

E.

and extreme attention at the holy maſs * but charmed to acknowledge himſelf in the noble pride of a Perſian king, in his love of juſtice, and his tenderneſs for Eſther.

Madame de Maintenon ſeated on a ſtool at his ſide, attentive to all his queſtions, expoſed to the looks of the whole audience, ſuſtaining them with modeſt majeſty, concealing under a declared ſatisfaction at the ſucceſs of her novices, the joy ſhe felt for applications ſo obliging.

The triumph of Eſther was her own: ſhe, ſaid they, is that Eſther, *who drew her days within the race proſcribed*, who by her virtue alone has captivated a powerful monarch, who in retirement employed herſelf in cultivating *thoſe young and tender flowers which ſhe had tranſplanted*, and who *weary of vain honour* placed her higheſt glory in humility. Ahaſuerus,

* *De ta gloire animé lui ſeul de tant de rois,*
S'arme pour ta querelle & combat pour tes droits, &c.

'Him only of the kings thy glory fires:
'For thee he arms, and for thy cauſe aſpires, &c.

Baiſer avec reſpect le parvis de tes temples.

'With rev'rence to ſalute thy ſacred courts.

E.

never

never ſpeaks to her of her beauty, and thoſe inchanting graces, which Racine could ſo well deſcribe, his attention is fixed on qualities more eſtimable:

Je ne trouve qu'en vous je ne ſçai qu'elle grace,
Qui me charme toujours, & jamais ne me laſſe:
De l'aimable vertu doux & puiſſans attraits.

'In you alone I muſt a grace admire,
'Which ever charms me and can never
'tire:
'Of lovely virtue ſweet reſiſtleſs power!
E.

At table he tells her.

Oui, vos moindres diſcours ont des graces ſecretes:
Une noble pudeur à tout ce que vous faites
Donne un prix que n'ont point ni la pourpre ni l'or, &c.

'Yes, ſecret ſweets your ev'ry word
'purſue:
'A gen'rous bluſh enhancing all you
'do,
'Reflects a luſtre far above the throne:
'A pomp to purple or to gold un-
'known.' E.

The jew who loved his ancient brethren and durſt not protect them was madame de Maintenon, who with the gentleſt diſpoſition imaginable, ſuffered the proteſtants to be oppreſſed. The perſecuted Jews were the proſcribed huguenots, and the audience were bold enough to applaud this verſe.

Et le roi trop crédule a ſigné cet édit.

'And ſo the cred'lous king the edict
'ſign'd:' E.

And this alſo.

On peut des plus grands rois ſurprendre la juſtice.

'The greateſt, juſteſt kings may be
'deceived.' E.

The arts of adulation had ſo much exaggerated the king's attention and vigilance: the great Arnauld had been ſo generally accuſed of inſolence for having ſaid that Lewis the great might be decieved, that this ſimple and immutable truth was looked upon as an uncommon inſtance of preſumption; many other applications were made, and many alluſions were diſcovered in this tragedy, which the author when he was writing it never intended ſhould be

be there, and which he did not perceive till after it was wrote.

This diverſion continued till lent, which came very ſeaſonably, to relieve madame de Maintenon overwhelmed with glory, fatigue and pleaſure. *Feb.* 26.

The regulations of Saint-Cyr were not obſerved with leſs ſtrictneſs on account of this entertainment: the profeſt were as ſervent, and as conſtant in their devotion as if the play had been repreſented at a hundred leagues diſtance: they had a bench in the pit, ſeparated from the reſt, but they ſeldom appeared there.

Racine deſired madame de Maintenon's permiſſion to dedicate Eſther to her, but ſhe had ſo little taſte for the moſt delicate praiſe that ſhe intreated him not to mention her even in the preface. When Eſther was printed, the charm was diſſolved; it appeared cold to the reader; many verſes inſipid; too little action; the ſtory too ſcrupulouſly followed; and the rules of art too much neglected. 'The edition ſaid 'the duke de la Feuillade is a bill of re-'view againſt the publick approbation.'

Paris offended that the court ſhould appropriate this entertainment wholly to itſelf, criticiſed Eſther with great ſeverity.

The friends of Racine in vain alledged that this tragedy had pleaſed the niceſt judges in the kingdom. At court they replied there is but one ſuffrage neceſſary, that of him or her, whom all the reſt are deſirous of pleaſing, 'Why, ſaid Ra-'cine, why was I obliged to lay myſelf 'open to cenſure, why was I diſſuaded 'from becoming a Carthuſian friar: I 'ſhould have been happier in that ſtate:' however a thouſand Lewis d'or's conſoled him.

In the year 1721 the comedians acted Eſther, and acted it but once; a great genius * concluded from thence that the piece was very bad. Eſther appeared no more, becauſe it had appeared without the chorus; it was a woman who had been deprived of her fineſt ornaments. Eſther tired the audience becauſe it was played by perſons who were not formed for it: had it been repreſented at Saint-Cyr it would have excited the ſame fervor of admiration, as it had done at firſt: it required that amiable ſimplicity, thoſe unaffected voices, thoſe innocent minds for whom Racine compoſed it. Eſther, which at the theatre of the Fauxbourg Saint-Germain appeared but an indiffe-

* Age of Lewis XIV. Vol. the ſecond, the Berlin edition.

rent

rent performance, at the theatre of Saint-Cyr is a maſter-piece.

'The impartial publick, adds the ſame 'author, ſaw nothing in it but an unin-'tereſting and improbable ſtory, a ſtupid 'prince who had lived ſix months with 'his wife without knowing who ſhe was, 'who without the leaſt pretence for it, 'commanded a whole nation to be mur-'dered, and with as little reaſon afterwards 'hanged his favourite.'

Nothing can be more unjuſt than this analyſis of Eſther; the publick ſaw not this, for the publick were chriſtians. In Eſther they were preſented with an intereſting and miraculous ſtory, from a book admitted to have divine authority. They did not examine the probability of the action, becauſe what is looked upon to be demonſtrated is never examined. Paris with regard to Eſther was in the ſame circumſtance as Athens with regard to Iphigenia, whoſe place was ſupplied by a heifer, or as any other dramatick piece in which after the action is miraculouſly conducted, the cataſtrophe is wound up miraculouſly likewiſe. It was ſufficient for the French as well as the Grecians that a play founded upon a religious ſubject was conformable to their notions of theology.

However that may be, the king was ſo well pleaſed with Eſther that Racine had orders to compoſe another piece for the following year. He excuſed himſelf on account of the few leiſure hours which the writing his majeſty's hiſtory left him. This excuſe was not admitted, the real cauſe of the poet's reluctance to obey was the difficulty of finding in the holy hiſtory a ſubject equally happy. Madame de Sevigné did not think it poſſible; but in the fourth book of Kings Racine found an action intereſting, and fruitful enough of incidents, to make love, confidants, and epiſodes unneceſſary. The extreme ſimplicity of the ſtory he repaired by the elegance of the poetry, and the want of ſome great paſſion, by the juſtneſs of the ſentiments, and the happy uſe of thoſe ſublime expreſſions with which the ſcripture abounds. He read his performance to madame de Maintenon, and when he came to this verſe:

Elle flotte, elle héſite, en un mot elle eſt femme:

'She wavers, heſitates, is woman ſtill.

E.

She could not help expreſſing ſome little diſpleaſure, which ſhewed that ſhe was ſtill too much a woman herſelf.

Monſieur

Monſieur Durand, ſuperiour of the Gentlemen of Saint Lazare, ſhook his head when, he heard Athaliah rehearſed and declared that he would write and preach againſt this amuſement. The muſician aſſured the rigid cenſor, that Athaliah was a holy piece, and oppoſed to his arguments the licence that had been given for the theatre at the fair at Saint-Laurent, which his ſociety had cauſed to be built for ſcenes leſs decent. Fear depreſſed the minds of the novices, and made them languid in their taſk: they rehearſed Athaliah without taſte; they learned without emulation the Jephthah of Boyer, and the abbé Têtu. Racine was offended at this coldneſs, and maintained that his play was calculated to inſpire virtue.

The miſſionary proved to him that to be the author of a tragedy, however pious it might be, was a crime ſufficient to damn him: Racine took his word for it, and would have burnt Athaliah as a piece unworthy of a good chriſtian, if madame de Maintenon had not repreſſed this whim: ſo certain it is, that ſometimes no one can be more ridiculous than a man of wit.

Hebert, rector of Verſailles, ſtrenuouſly oppoſed theſe innocent * amuſements at

* Manuſcript memoirs of Hebert biſhop of Agen, from page 212, to page 237.

an

an aſſembly of the ladies of charity, which madame de Maintenon regularly attended: the diſcourſe before the conference turned upon the tragedy of Eſther. Flattery improved upon the praiſes that truth had beſtowed: the rector groaned and impatiently waited for an opportunity to ſpeak. Madame de Maintenon with an air of ſatisfaction, repeated the names of all the religious, who had either been ſpectators, or deſired to be ſo. 'You monſieur, ſaid ſhe to the 'rector, are the only one who has not ſeen 'this piece, but ſhall we not ſee you there 'ſoon?' Hebert, only replied by a profound bow: madame de Maintenon in anſwering the energetick ſilence of the rector, ſaid, 'Father de Chamilly of the 'oratory, venerable for his years and 'piety, has ſolicited a place in our pit: I 'would, have you, purſued ſhe, looking at 'Hebert, go there to day in ſuch good 'company.' I beg you will diſpenſe with my obedience, Madam, ſaid Hebert, and immediately began his exhortation.

When it was over the dutcheſs de Chevreuſe and madame de Beauvilliers chid the rector for ſo publicly denying to go. 'You have mortified madame de 'Maintenon extremely, ſaid they, to ſee 'Eſther is a favour ſolicited with ardor.

'You

'You are invited, and you refuſe with 'the air of a perſon who diſpproves of this 'amuſement. You will no longer be con- 'fided in as uſual. You will be thought to 'carry ſeverity of morals to an extravagant 'length. You will be dreaded as the 'cenſor of biſhops, and by loſing your 'intereſt in the court your zeal will be 'leſs effectual.'

'My reaſons, interupted the rector, are 'not founded upon vain and ridiculous 'ſcruples. I will lay them before you, and 'make madame de Maintenon judge of 'them herſelf; if after hearing them, ſhe 'condemns me, I will comply with her 'requeſt and ſee Eſther.'

That very evening he ſaid to her, 'You 'know, madam, the great reſpect I have 'for you; you alſo know with what 'earneſtneſs I declaim in the pulpit a- 'gainſt theatrical repreſentations. Eſther 'is not comprehended in this prohibition.' 'Why then, interupted madame de Main- 'tenon, do you refuſe to ſee it?' 'The 'people, replied the rector, know no dif- 'ference between this play and another. 'If I go, they will be guided rather by 'my actions than my words. The cha- 'racter of a miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt is 'too delicate, too reſpectable to be ſacri- 'ficed to complaiſance or curioſity. Con-

'ſider,

'ſider, madam, conſider, whether it is 'decent for prieſts to be preſent at a 'play, performed by young agreeable 'women fixed in their view for two 'whole hours? It is expoſing them to 'temptations; many of the courtiers have 'owned to me, that their paſſions were 'more raiſed by the ſight of theſe young 'girls with all that amiable ſimplicity 'in their manners, than by the moſt al-'luring arts of the actreſſes: virgin-inno-'cence is a more powerful attractive than 'the ſtudied graces of proſtituted beauty; 'vice profanes every thing that it ap-'proaches.'

'However, ſaid madame de Mainte-non to him, you do not condemn thoſe amuſements, ſo advantageous to youth.' 'I think, replied he, that they ought not to be admitted into any ſyſtem of good education, the great end of your eſtabliſh-ment, madam, is to form your novices to purity of manners. Will not this purity be deſtroyed by expoſing them upon a theatre to the eager gazing of the whole court? Will it not baniſh that modeſt ſhame which retains them in their duty? Will a young woman be apprehenſive of a private interview with a man, after having appeared without confuſion before many? The praiſes, which the ſpectators laviſh upon the beauty and genius of theſe

theſe young perſons, ſuggeſts ſentiments of pride, and gives them a deſire to pleaſe: even I, in the exerciſe of a function which inceſſantly oppoſes the paſſions, cannot defend myſelf from a ſecret pride of preaching before my ſovereign; how then ſhould children repreſs a vanity ſo natural?'

'Yet theſe exerciſes, ſaid madame de Maintenon, have in all times been authoriſed in colleges:' no inference, replied the rector, can be drawn from thence in favour of ſuch exerciſes in the ſchools of girls. Boys are deſtined to fill employments which oblige them to ſpeak in public: to an eccleſiaſtic, a lawyer, a ſoldier, the art of declamation are equally neceſſary. Girls are deſigned for retirement; timidity is in them a virtue; modeſty is their higheſt fame. I do not ſpeak of the time waſted in getting their parts, of the ideas raiſed by the inſinuating charms of verſe, of the pride of thoſe who play, of the envy of thoſe who are excluded from it, of the lofty airs which they aſſume upon the theatre, and which they cannot quit in ſociety, and of many other things contrary to the nature of your eſtabliſhment. Permit me to make one obſervation more, all the convents of the kingdom have their eyes fixed upon Saint-Cyr. The example given by Saint-Cyr will

will be followed every where. They will be weary of acting pious pieces: they will for the future act profane ones: they will invite the laity to theſe repreſentations. The convents now inſtead of forming novices will give actreſſes to the ſtage.'

'All this ſeems very reaſonable, ſaid madame de Maintenon, but St. Francis du Sales, is not ſo rigid as you; he permits his daughters to repreſent religious dramas.' 'It is true, replied he, but this great ſaint permitted it but ſeldom, and then only among themſelves, and in the inmoſt receſſes of the monaſtery; at the convent of the viſitation they are private amuſements; at Saint-Cyr they are public entertainments.'

Madame de Maintenon was ſtaggered by theſe reaſons, but the abbé Gobelin, monſieur Fenelon, meſſieurs Tiberge, and Briſacier approved of Eſther; the abbé Deſmarais had not condemned it, and it was determined that Athaliah ſhould be acted. The devotees and the wits were alarmed at this news, the former through piety, the latter through envy. Madame de Maintenon was told, that it was indecent to produce her neice and other young girls, aſſembled from every province in the kingdom, upon a theatre,

theatre, and that ſuch diverſions ſuited but ill with the idea which had been conceived of the eſtabliſhment of Saint-Cyr. Anonymous letters were wrote to her, full of malignant ſatire, under the appearance of zeal for religion; they accuſed Racine of janſeniſm, and aſked her, if ſhe was deſirous of infecting her houſe with that hereſy.

The ſanctity of the place, the pious ſubjects of the dramas, the manner in which the ſpectators were introduced at Saint-Cyr, in the train of the king, juſtified it ſufficiently *. She would have deſpiſed theſe cenſures, founded upon envy or miſtaken zeal, but the arguments of Hebert, ſupported by the abbé Deſmarais, made a great impreſſion upon her. Athaliah was acted twice in the dreſſes of Saint-Cyr, in madame de Maintenon's apartment, at Verſailles, before the king. The action did not appear leſs intereſting; it even made a greater impreſſion upon the ſpectators, than when debaſed by a Jehoſheba covered with paint, an over-acted Athaliah, a high-prieſt, fitter, ſaid madame de Caylus, to imitate the Capucenades of little father Honore, than the majeſty of a prophet.

* Memoirs of madame de Caylus.

It was only at the ſolicitation of their Britannic majeſties, that madame de Maintenon permitted a more magnificent repreſentation of Athaliah. Father de la Chaiſe, Fenelon, and ſeveral other eccleſiaſtics, ſanctified it by their preſence. Madame de Maintenon intreated the biſhop of Chartres to be there. Fenelon, his collegue and his friend, could not prevail upon him. While Athaliah was acting, the biſhop gave the ladies of St. Lewis a diſcourſe upon the deplorable condition of chriſtians, who indulged themſelves before lent in ſuch ſcandalous pleaſures, and upon the neceſſity of making reparation for their fault, by retirement and exerciſes of piety.

Racine was now intirely diſguſted with the theatre, he declared that he would write nothing more but the king's hiſtory, but whether he feared that he ſhould be accuſed of ingratitude, if he confined himſelf to truth, or of flattery, if he was not ſevere; whether he wanted materials, or that he thought it beneath him to put the gazettes or the reports of the court into elegant language: he went on but ſlowly with his work, which, fortunately for his fame, was conſumed in a fire.

Valincour gave a Savoiard 20 Louis d'ors, to go and fetch it from the midſt of the flames. The Savoiard inſtead of this valuable manuſcript, brought a collection of the gazettes of France. Theſe gazettes, the memoirs of the time, the collection of original pieces, Dangeau's journal of the news of the court, that part of the age of Lewis the XIV. upon arts, the writing of ſeveral officers upon military affairs, the negotiations of ſome ambaſſadors, the acts of congreſſes, the letters of monſieur de Torcy and the princeſs des Urſins on the affairs of Spain, may conſole the curious for their loſs: at leaſt they have no reaſon to regret the ſtyle of Racine and Boileau, whoſe proſe had nothing extraordinary in it, or that of Valincour, a writer of no eminence.

Racine wrote ſome cantata's for the uſe of Saint-Cyr, which ſhew that his genius was not turned for lyric poetry. One of them was performed before the king, who, at theſe verſes,

Mon Dieu! quelle guerre cruelle!
Je trouv deux hommes en moi.
L'un veut que plein d'amour pour toi,
Je te ſois ſans ceſſe fidelle:
L'autre à tes volontès rebelle,
Me ſouleve contre ta loi.

'My

‘ My God! what cruel ſtrife!
‘ I find two men in me.
‘ One full of love and life,
‘ Would faithful prove to thee.
‘ The other rebel to thy will,
‘ Againſt thy law excites me ſtill.

E.

ſaid to madame de Maintenon, ‘ Ah ma-
‘ dam, I well know theſe two men.’

When Athaliah was printed, more eagerneſs was ſhewn to condemn than to read it; the public thought that a play in which a child was the principal character was only fit for children. Racine was convinced that he had failed in the choice of his ſubject. Madame de Maintenon was the only one who confidently maintained that it was excellent. With genius, true taſte expired: perſons ſuperior to their age, are always erroneouſly judged by it: how was it poſſible for Racine to pleaſe a nation that had been charmed with Campiſtron?

When the regency had reſtored the national genius to its vigor, which had been depreſſed by the gloomineſs of devotion, Athaliah appeared again and was received with the higheſt applauſe; they found alluſions in it, they made applications

tions. In Jehoaſh, ſaved by the high-prieſt, and by Jehoſheba, the people ſaw their king preſerved by a biſhop, and by madame de Ventadour: Abner was Villeroi, and ſo of the reſt. Racine's family were extremely ſurpriſed that the comedians durſt preſume to act a play, the privilege of which was only granted to the ladies of Saint Lewis: and Madame de Maintenon expreſſed her aſtoniſhment, that the archbiſhop of Paris did not oppoſe a repreſentation which he had looked upon as profane. The preceding year the magiſtrates of Amſterdam had ſhewn themſelves more ſevere and more prudent; they prohibited the French comedians from repreſenting Athaliah, as being, in their opinions a parody upon the holy writings; Phedra they regarded as a leſſon of morality, and Athaliah as an inſult upon the majeſty of religion.

Notwithſtanding the unjuſt prejudices of the public, Athaliah has been acted at court by the dutcheſs of Burgundy, the duke of Orleans, the counteſs d'Ayen, mademoiſelle d'Oſmond, and other ladies. Madame de Maintenon introduced theſe ingenious amuſements, becauſe ſhe thought they might be of uſe to the young princeſs, and afford ſome relief to that languor which ſtole upon the king, whoſe heart though worn out with pleaſures had not

loſt

loſt its ſenſibility; he loved the fine arts, but even this taſte the auſterity of devotion condemned.

Madame de Maintenon as pious, tho' leſs rigid, always patronized genius; the abbé de Choiſy, Duché Rouſſeau, the abbé Têtu, the abbé Pelegrin wrote for Saint-Cyr, and were generouſly rewarded by her. To her we owe Judith, Jephthah, Abſalom, and the ſacred odes.

Among all the men of wit in her time Racine was moſt in her taſte. The poet repaid her preference with the moſt unfeigned eſteem, 'I know not, he often 'ſaid, a woman of greater virtue.' She procured the poſt of gentleman in ordinary for him *. 'I love to ſee him, ſaid 'ſhe, he has in his manners and diſcourſe 'all the ſimplicity of innocence: I can 'read Boileau, and that is all, he is too 'much of a poet.' However ſhe was praiſed in the ſatire upon women, where Boileau ſays that he knew one:

Humble dans les grandeurs, ſage dans la fortune,
Qui gemit comme Eſther de ſa gloire importune.

* Manuſcripts of the biſhop of Agen.

'In

'In grandeur humble, and in height
'ſedate,
'Who groans like Eſther under glori-
'ous weight.

ELPHINSTON.

He had her alſo in view when he ſpeaks of a lady,

Qu'à l'égliſe jamais devant le Dieu jaloux,
Un faſtueux carreau ſoit vu ſous ſes genoux.

'Who will not that the jealous God
'ſhall ſee,
'A pompous cuſhion ſink beneath her
'knee.

ELPHINSTON.

But as imprudent in his converſation as unjuſt in his writings, he was continually throwing out ſome ſatirical hints againſt her firſt huſband, who ſhe was not willing ſhould ever be mentioned before the king or her. One day when he was railing at burleſque poetry, he added, 'Thank 'heaven this taſte is now over, and Sca-'ron is no longer read even in the pro-'vinces.'

Racine inſtantly changed the converſation and as ſoon as they were alone; 'It is impoſſible, ſaid he to him, to go 'with you to court, yeſterday Don Japhet was the ſubject, to day Virgil 'traveſti: are you ignorant of her con-'cern in your rallery?' 'No, anſwered 'Boileau, but when I ſee her, it is the 'firſt thing that I forget.'

Madame de Maintenon often ſpoke of her huſband, and even extended her benefactions to ſome of his relations, but ſhe never pronounced his name'* 'when 'I was with that man' ſhe uſed to ſay, and generally: 'When I attended that 'poor cripple.'

This reſerve was mean and ridiculous without doubt, but ſhe owed it to the king. Whatever was great in her conduct, proceeded from herſelf; all that was little her ſituation ſubjected her to. It was her love for publick good that made her deſire Racine to draw up a memorial repreſenting the diſtreſs of the people. It was her obedience to the king that made her name the author to him notwithſtanding her promiſe to the contrary. Lewis enraged that his hiſtorian had examined into the faults of his adminiſtration, forbid her ever to ſee him again.

* Memoirs of madame de Bouju.

Madame

Madame de Maintenon ſaw Racine once more, but it was only to take leave of him. Hence the melancholy that oppreſſed him, hence a violent fever and a ſwift decay. Hence his extreme diſguſt for Verſailles, where he no longer ſaw her who made his reſidence there agreeable. His diſgrace took up all his thoughts, he ſought to diſcover his crime, he found it not, and made it by his imprudence weary of Verſailles; he indulged his prevailing inclination that recalled him to Port-Royal, which he pretended to have abandoned for ever. He left the court ſecretly to go and viſit his old friends and maſters there. The king heard of it with indignation, for ſays Hébert, Janſeniſm was in his eyes the greateſt of vices: madame de Maintenon durſt no longer ſpeak to the king of a man that was become odious to him. Racine's grief and too late regret ſhortened his days; a poet ſo tender muſt neceſſarily die of exquiſite ſenſibility. The king, during his laſt ſickneſs, often ſent to know how he did, but being informed that Racine had in his will deſired to be interred at Port-Royal, he expreſſed no concern for his death. After this let us praiſe kings, and depend upon friends at court.

CHAPTER XVI.

The king viſits Saint-Cyr.

THE king's affection for Saint-Cyr ſuffered no abatement, nothing ſoothed him more than the praiſes of this eſtabliſhment. He gave a diſtinguiſhing reception to Treviſani a roman prelate, who, when he ſaw the houſe, had ſaid: 'The 'fathers of the church have tortured their 'imaginations in vain about the grandeur of 'the *fiat*, which God pronounced when he 'created the world: if they were in my 'place, they would find it difficult to 'conceive that the *fiat* of a mortal pro-'duced all this.'

The king went himſelf to deliver to the ladies of Saint-Cyr the bull for uniting the revenues of the abbé of Saint-Denis to their houſe. The pope when he granted it, ſaid twice to the duke de Chaulnes, 'when you write to madame de Maintenon, 'aſſure her that I grant this through my 'eſteem for her.'

The king thought it neceſſary upon this occaſion to declare his intentions again. 'In this eſtabliſhment, ſaid he, my only 'views

'views have been the glory of God, the 'advantage of my kingdom, and the re-'lief of my nobleſſe. I conjure the 'community,' added he, addreſſing himſelf to the ladies, and afterwards ſettling his looks upon madame de Maintenon, to 'ſecond theſe views, by confirming 'themſelves daily in true piety, and by 'ſtrictly obſerving the ordinances of their 'inſtitution; I ſhall then ſuffer no uneaſy 'apprehenſion concerning the education 'of the young ladies, for whom this 'eſtabliſhment was formed. This de-'ſign will be accompliſhed, if the ladies 'are perfect in their vocation, or at leaſt 'if they perſiſt in endeavouring to be-'come ſo.'

It is impoſſible, ſaid madame de Maintenon, but that they muſt become excellent nuns after having a king for their preacher.

'It does not belong to me, anſwered the 'king, to enter into a minute detail of 'their duties, but I hope that by often 'repeating to them my motives for this 'eſtabliſhment, I ſhall render them faith-'ful to thoſe duties. I hear every day 'accounts of the ladies which give me 'great ſatisfaction, and I ſhall not ſpare 'either my viſits or my diſcourſe, if I can 'be of any uſe to them.'

Madame de Maintenon gave him ſome inſtances of the great piety of the ladies profeſſed, and of the young ladies. 'I am 'not ſurpriſed, replied the king, to find 'theſe virtues in ladies who have conſe-'crated themſelves to God, but I admire 'them in children, I was deſirous that 'great good might be done here, it is, 'and my vows are granted.'

'You do not then fire, repent of the 'great expence of this building, ſaid ma-'dame de Maintenon.' 'Ah! replied 'the king, if it were to be done again, 'I would do it with the utmoſt chear-'fulneſs.'

We dare not flatter ourſelves reſumed madame de Maintenon that among ſo many perſons of different diſpoſitions and of every rank, that there are none who will deviate from the virtue with which we endeavour to inſpire all, but it will be difficult even for theſe, with ſuch principles engraved upon their hearts, not to feel their influence, and be again brought back to their duty, and certainly the greater number will live in innocence. 'Oh! that I could give to God, ſaid the 'king, ſighing, as many ſouls, as my 'example has ſnatched from him.'

There

Three of the young ladies having been attacked by that diſeaſe, which is cured by the touch of our kings ever ſince the prieſts have communicated to them the art of working miracles, the king deſired to ſee them in private. Bontems introduced them into his cloſet: the patients kneeled; the king entered alone, he looked attentively upon them, then raiſing his eyes to heaven, he uttered a fervent prayer, and putting his hand upon the cheek of each he ſaid, *I touch thee*; *God cure thee!* The next day, adds Manſeau, ſhe who was moſt violently afflicted with the diſtemper was cured without any aſſiſtance; ſo eaſy it is for the imagination to perform miracles, or for bigottry to believe them.

CHAPTER XVII.

The abſolute vows.

MADAME de Maintenon grew daily more pious, ſhe acquired that ſeverity of manners highly neceſſary for the foundreſs of a religous houſe. Her own averſion to the world, perſuaded her that it was eaſy to renounce it, and having diſingaged herſelf from it as much as her ſituation would permit, ſhe required her daughters to make the ſame ſacrifice.

Already ſome of them reſigning themſelves to the fervor of their devotion, complained that their inſtitution was not auſtere enough, and entered among the Carmelites. Saint-Thereſa deprived the community of perſons, who were particularly qualified for the education of the novices. Madame de Maintenon was apprehenſive that after her death, the devout would embrace an order more perfect, and that ſuch as were weary of their preſent ſtate would be diſguſted with one, that would ſubject them to a ſtill greater reſtraint.

The ladies united only by a common way of life, and a uniform habit, might enter the world again with the diſpenſation of the biſhop. She was afraid that the regulations would be leſs ſtrictly obſerved, that the ſee of Chartres might be filled by a court prelate, that her houſe would be unpeopled, the young ladies leſs carefully educated, that the prince would no longer continue his benefactions to a houſe which varied from its firſt principles, and that if the revenues ſhould be attacked, the parliament would ceaſe to protect a community uſeleſs to the ſtate. Such were madame de Maintenon's fears, which augmented every day.

An

An eſtate fell to a lay ſiſter in the community of Saint-Cyr, the conditional vows did not render her incapable of inheriting; ſome of her relations diſputed her right, others perſuaded her to enforce it. The lay ſiſter choſe to renounce the inheritance. It was probable however that her example might not be imitated, and this liberty deſtroyed diſintereſtedneſs, by leaving a property intended to be excluded.

The ladies had been ſuffered to believe that ſolemn vows had the force of abſolute vows. Some of them now learned with joy, others with grief, all with extreme aſtoniſhment, that theſe vows could only be binding by conforming to the rules anciently inſtituted and approved by the church. Some of the profeſſed, weary of their condition, had an inclination to return to the world; they liſtened to the advice of perſons who were intereſted in their return to it, and ſeemed to perform their duties like perſons who performed them againſt their will.

Madame de Maintenon was afflicted by the murmurs, the arguments, and ſentiments of ſome of the ladies, to hinder them from wavering, ſhe was deſirous of eſtabliſhing a body of directors, whoſe piety and wiſdom would give her a ſecurity, that after her death Saint-Cyr would

be at leaſt well governed in ſpiritual affairs.

For this purpoſe ſhe aſſembled her council, which was compoſed of Meſſieurs de Fenelon, Deſmarais, Tiberge, and Briſacier, who all adviſed her to give the direction of Saint-Cyr to the prieſts of Saint-Lazarus. Theſe prieſts were preferred as being eccleſiaticks, who were all of one mind, with regard to the principles of religion, and enforced their doctrine by frequent conferences upon morality: they were likewiſe pious, humble and diſintered. A new building was added to Saint-Cyr for their accommodation. Madame de Maintenon, being aſked, why ſhe did not make choice of the jeſuits? 'Becauſe, replied ſhe, I am 'reſolved to be miſtreſs in my own houſe.'

The ladies of the community were again alarmed by the diſcuſſion of their vows: the biſhop of Chartres, full of a holy zeal, repreſented to them that abſolute vows were neceſſary to confirm their order, that the title of the abbey of Saint-Denis could not be ſecurely ſuppreſſed but in favour of a religious houſe, that other princes, other miniſters might be prevailed upon to reſtore it, that a community authoriſed by the holy ſee would be leſs ſubject to revolutions. He went to declare to the ladies, that their vows being

being conditional they were under a neceſſity of chooſing one of the ancient orders of the church, and that of theſe Saint Auguſtin was the beſt.

This diſcourſe appeared very harſh to the ladies of Saint-Lewis, they looked upon the change that was propoſed to them as a novelty, which equally attacked their conſciences, their ordinances, and method of life. The biſhop of Chartres filled their minds with doubts and inquietude: madame de Maintenon appeared again, and reſtored them to peace.

The king diſapproved of this change as much as the ladies, he revered the piety of cloiſters, without honouring the dreſs and other regulations, which better prove the extravagant notions of thoſe who inſtituted them, than the reſignation of thoſe who ſubmitted to them, to this was added, an extreme diſlike of every thing that was new. To madame de Maintenon's propoſal he anſwered, 'But what will be 'thought of this change? They will 'ridicule us, they will ſay, that we know 'not what to fix upon, that every year 'will preſent a new ſcene, and other 'alterations will be always expected.'

Madame de Maintenon, although determined upon a change, would not too ſuddenly oppoſe the king's inclinations; ſhe left

left it to time and reflection to ſhew him the juſtneſs of thoſe reaſons which ſhe had laid before him, with that ſeeming indifference and ſubmiſſion with which that authority is always pleaſed. At length the king was convinced, and thus nobly expreſſed his intentions: 'we will then make a 'convent, let it be ſaid, that we took 'our meaſures with little judgment before; 'let the people find fault with every 'thing; as for us, without being moved 'with idle cenſures, we will go on, and 'carry our work to greater perfection.'

At this news all the ladies were alarmed. The noviciate was what moſt terrified them. They were apprehenſive of being diſmiſſed. They looked upon this new examination, as a pretence to exclude them. Their directors aſſembled to deliberate upon the alterations that were to be made in the ordinances. The ladies ſaid that they might ſpare themſelves the trouble of altering them, and they muſt propoſe the innovations in a full chapter. Madame de Maintenon ſoothed them by giving them the king's picture and her own. She promiſed them that they ſhould be permitted to retain their habit: this was one of the moſt important articles. The elder profeſſed ſhewed as much reluctance to take another, as ſubmiſſion to all the auſte-

auſterities they were reſolved to impoſe upon them.

The council was again ſummoned, and the ſecret carefelly kept, for fear of alarming the ladies who might have united to break the meaſures which were taking againſt them. The theologicians had a conference, they could not agree; they were diſguſted with each other, and could only perſuade the lay ſiſters to comply, who firſt ſhewed the change in their inſtitution by the alteration of ther habit.

Notwithſtanding the oppoſition made by the ladies, the council drew up a petition, in which the profeſſed intreated his holineſs to permit them the abſolute vows. It was neceſſary that the whole community ſhould ſign it, part of which would not ſuffer it to be mentioned: the directors employed all their ſkill, but the more they urged the neceſſity of this change, and the perfections of a monaſtick life, the more the ladies trembled at their unworthineſs. Some deſired time to conſider of what was propoſed to them; many offered with tears to follow blindly the advice of their benefactreſs; others durſt not ſpeak, and this affecting ſilence diſtreſſed madame de Maintenon.

She

She now reſolved never to treat this affair but in private interviews with ſuch as were favourable to her deſigns, and with the familiar air of converſation with all the reſt. This method ſucceeded ſo well, that the moſt rebellious ſubmitted; this ſeeming diſintereſtedneſs removed all their ſuſpicions; worldly intereſt which mixes itſelf with the moſt holy deſigns to corrupt and profane them, had a part in this; the ladies thought their compliance might be uſeful to their relations, and ſacrificed themſelves a ſecond time for the happineſs of their families. They were bound by deeds, upon which they were not conſulted, the original of their ancient conſtitutions was taken from them, and they were deprived of other writings which might have juſtified their reſiſtance.

Father Bourdaloue to conciliate all, propoſed that both conditional and abſolute vows ſhould be eſtabliſhed: the former till the age of thirty, the latter for ſuch as were willing to take them. This regulation, which was borrowed from the jeſuits, an order remarkable for the wiſdom of its ordinances, was favoured by father de la Chaiſe, reliſhed by the king, and approved by madame de Maintenon, but rejected by the biſhop, too pious to be ſenſible how ridiculous it was in an enlightened age, to permit children to diſpoſe

poſe of their liberty, and at all times how imprudent and ſevere to truſt the happineſs of their whole lives to promiſes made in a tranſient fervor of devotion.

Cavallerini, after having had his firſt audience of the king, went to Saint-Cyr, accompanied by Saintot, maſter of the ceremonies. He there told madame de Maintenon, that his holineſs had commanded him twice in full audience to aſſure her of his eſteem: he delivered to her a brief very glorious for her, which ſhe would have buried in oblivion, if the datary's office in Rome had not ſent copies of it into France. When it was publiſhed, it was unanimouſly allowed to be to her equal to a contract of marriage; for whatever propenſity may be ſuppoſed in the court of Rome, to effect pious purpoſes, by reſources the moſt profane, a pope never ſupplicates the miſtreſs of a king.

After the firſt compliments were over, the nuncio added, that the holy father expected from her zeal for religion, that ſhe would employ her intereſt with the king to accommodate the differences which might ſtill remain between his majeſty and the holy ſee, and that ſhe would by her good offices contribute to the peace of chriſtendom. She replied, that her

her attachment to the king would not permit her to entertain any other ſentiments than thoſe he attributed to her, that ſhe did not think herſelf worthy of thoſe which the pope was pleaſed to entertain of her, and that ſhe was extremely rejoiced to find that a nunciature of ſuch great importance was confided to a prelate of ſuch diſtinguiſhed merit, that he would be ſenſible of the king's piety by viewing Saint-Cyr, of his good intentions by his diſcourſe, and of his love of peace by his whole conduct.

The next day, the nuncio ſent her the pope's preſents, which conſiſted of trifles for the toilet, and a curious ſhrine filled with the bones of a Deodatus, or God-given, which had been lately dug up in the catacombs of Rome.

1692. The veneration of the profeſſed for madame de Maintenon was increaſed by this viſit; they reflected upon every circumſtance of it, and all fill'd them with aſtoniſhment. Madame de Maintenon diſtributed among them the chapelets and perfumes ſent by the pope, and theſe preſents were ſerviceable to her deſigns, which ſhe purſued with the moſt unwearied application. For fifteen days ſucceſſively, ſhe ſet out from Verſailles at five o'clock in the morning, came to Saint-Cyr before

before prayer-time, and often wakened the community.

She compoſed diſcourſes full of that ſpirituality which is not imbibed in a court: during a whole month ſhe aſſiſted at all the exerciſes; the profeſſed durſt not complain of a yoke which ſhe bore herſelf. They became more ſtrict in the performance of their duties; the ſleeves were lengthened, the veils were lowered; they avoided being ſeen by the viſitors that reſorted to Saint-Cyr: devotion was carried to exceſs, and they ſigned the petition. Cardinal Janſan preſented it to the pope, who ſaid to him, 'We can refuſe 'nothing *to the king's lady.*' The brief arrived, and permitted them to preſerve their habit, and not to take the ſo much deteſted monaſtick dreſs.

Madame de Loubert, at that time ſuperior of the community, gave the example of humility, and was the firſt that entered into all the exerciſes of the noviciate. There was a neceſſity for having miſtreſſes worthy of ſuch novices. Madame de Maintenon fixed upon the daughters of the viſitation at Chaillot. She had a high veneration for the founder of that order; throughout all his epiſtles ſhe found inſtructions wonderfully effectual in bringing back ſouls to God. She often

ſaid

ſaid, that the character of Saint Francis de Salles was that amiable charity which ſteals upon the affections, and that he perſuaded mortals to renounce themſelves, although he required no extraordinary acts of devotion.

Madame Priolo then governed Chaillot with great reputation. Madame de Maintenon propoſed to her to form Saint-Cyr. After many denials from this nun, and many more from her convent, madame de Maintenon went in the king's coach to fetch her from Chaillot, and carried her in triumph to Saint-Cyr, where all the profeſſed, except madame d'Auzy who returned to the world, began their noviciate.

The king honoured her, who conducted it with a viſit: he congratulated madame Priolo upon her firſt ſucceſs, and ſpoke to her ſeveral times in private. He ſaid to the miſtreſs of the novices, who declared ſhe was greatly edified with ſo many good examples: 'All that I deſire of 'them, is to follow yours.' He enquired for madame de Loubert, who had lately reſigned her place of ſuperior: 'It is not 'eaſy to perceive her, ſaid madame de 'Maintenon, ſhe is always in the laſt 'place, and the firſt in the loweſt offices.' 'In all conditions of life, replied the king, 'we

'we ought to love to do that which others 'are commanded to do.'

Madame de Maintenon then preſented a ſheet of paper to him, and intreated him to write his intentions there. The king only wrote theſe words, *chooſe proper perſons, and faithful to the rules.* Madame Priolo told him, that many of the young ladies deſired to be admitted to their noviciate. 'It is neceſſary, ſaid the king, 'that they ſhould deſire this as a favour, 'and that the moſt worthy be choſen.' 'Sire, reſumed madame de Maintenon, 'you recommend this precept ſtrongly.' 'Yes, added the king, the choice of proper perſons, and a faithful obſervance of 'the laws, is the whole ſyſtem of all governments.'

'If your deſigns are accompliſhed, Sire, 'ſaid madame Priolo, Saint-Cyr will produce eminent virtues; the world will 'have the advantage of them, and your 'majeſty will have done great good.' 'It is juſt, anſwered the king, that I 'ſhould do good here, to repair the evils 'I have done elſewhere. Adieu, ladies, 'added he, your time is very precious, 'I am not willing to interrupt your exerciſes.' 'Your majeſty, ſaid madame de 'Maintenon, will be a good overſeer, 'for you are very exact and even ſevere.'

'Yes,

'Yes, replied the king, and without 'conſtant vigilance the beſt ſocieties 'will degenerate from their firſt rules.'

The miſtreſſes and the novices fulfilled the deſires and expectations of the king. The ladies of the viſitation admired in the ladies of Saint Lewis more perfections than they were able to give them. The noviciate laſted a whole year, yet did not interrupt the education of the young ladies. The care of it was confided to the daughters of the ſociety of father Barré. Mademoiſelle Balbien ſerved as general miſtreſs of the claſſes, and madame de Maintenon directed all.

1694. After the ladies had made profeſſion, madame de Fontaine was elected ſuperior. Madame de Loubert had entered into the noviciate with fervor, and performed it with edification; but either through an averſion for being ſuperior, or that ſhe apprehended the conſequences of a more ſtrict engagement, ſhe did not take the ſolemn vows, but intreated madame de Maintenon to ſuffer her to remain in the community, where ſhe imitated the devotion of thoſe whom ſhe was not able to imitate in renouncing the world.

The king honoured the new ſuperior with his advice, and the ladies of Chaillot with

with his praiſes. One of the nuns wrote an account of this viſit. I ſhall give the converſation that paſſed in it here, although there is not much variety in it, becauſe there are a thouſand perſons who are curious to hear a king ſpeak, and a hundred thouſand curious to hear this king. He entered the hall with madame de Maintenon; he deſired the ladies to ſit, and after thanking madame Priolo for her care of them, he addreſſed himſelf to madame de Fontaine in this manner.

'I judge of your capacity for the place 'of ſuperior of this community, by the 'choice which the biſhop of Chartres, 'madame Priolo, and madame de Main-'tenon have made of you. They are 'good judges of merit; I do not doubt 'but you will fulfil their hopes and ex-'pectations; and you, madam, well 'know how to unite a firmneſs in main-'taining what has been lately eſtabliſhed, 'with a gentleneſs neceſſary in all new in-'ſtitutions. The ladies will ſhew by 'their readineſs to obey, that they have 'voluntarily reſigned themſelves to God, 'and their piety will be conformable to 'this regularity which I ſo greatly ad-'mire. We ought, in every ſtate of 'life, to aſpire towards perfection; you 'ladies will reach it in your ſteady ad-'herence to that you are placed in.'

Madame

Madame Angelica de Beavais, a nun of the viſitation, daughter to a woman of the bed-chamber to Anne of Auſtria, with whom he had been in love in his youth, and now ſecretary to madame Priolo, expreſſed great ſurpriſe to find the king ſo well acquainted with the duties of a monaſtic life. 'Whenever you pleaſe, 'ſaid the king to her, I will have a con-'ference with you, which I will ſupport 'very well: you will ſupport it better, 'for your vocation has been good: the 'queen my mother oppoſed it. You 'have well continued what you have 'well begun; it is a great happineſs to 'give ourſelves to God from our earlieſt 'years.'

He afterwards mentioned his deſign of fixing the number of the ladies of the choir to thirty-ſix: 'But I can eaſily 'comprehend, ſaid he, that ſo large a 'houſe will require more. It will be 'more meritorious for the profeſſed to 'ſerve themſelves, than to be ſerved by 'others. Obedience better ſuits a nun 'than command; by doing what belongs 'to the lay ſiſters, you will acquire one 'virtue more. It is neceſſary that theſe 'places of a new creation ſhould be well 'filled; let the choice be made without 'partiality; if we would do general 'good, ſelf-intereſt muſt be laid aſide.

'You,

'You, madam, ſaid he to madame 'Priolo, have regulated every thing with 'ſo much judgment and prudence, that 'good order will neceſſarily be eſtabliſh-'ed; every one is charmed with your 'conduct, and Noailles is a ſincere ad-'mirer of Priolo; he has ſpoke to me of 'your father, a man of letters, and of 'his hiſtory in Latin, which I do not un-'derſtand; for you well know, ſaid he, 'to madame de Beauvais, that my child-'hood was neglected, and that I had not 'ſo good an education as I have eſta-'bliſhed at Saint-Cyr.' Then turning to madame de Maintenon, he added, 'I 'hope the ladies of Chaillot will always 'aſſiſt the ladies of Saint Lewis with their 'advice.' 'Truly, Sire, ſaid one of them, 'your majeſty has been very unjuſtly ac-'cuſed of hating the religious.' 'I hate 'them in the world, replied the king; in 'their convents I love and honour them.' He thanked the convent of Chaillot for the care they had taken of his numerous noviciate, and left them all charmed with his affability and goodneſs.

The reader has now ſeen by what ſteps Saint-Cyr has arrived to a fixed ſtate, and has nothing now to apprehend from the levity and inconſtancy of the human mind. The ladies of Saint Lewis ſubjected to the regulations of Saint Auguſtin, adore their vows, ſeeing in their

ties,

ties the perpetuity of their houſe, and never ceaſe to bleſs heaven for having inſpired madame de Maintenon with the deſign of founding this inſtitution, and for giving her abilities for ſecuring it.

The End of the NINTH BOOK.

BOOK THE TENTH.

CHAPTER I.

Reports and Councils.

IT was publickly reported, and eſpecially in foreign countries, where calumny and falſhood gain more eaſy belief, that madame de Maintenon was wholly employed in affairs of ſtate; that ſhe had changed the whole court by her cabals; that ſhe had inſiſted upon a place in the council; that the dauphin had demanded of her, in very ſtrong terms, by what title; that ſhe was admitted, notwithſtanding the oppoſition made by the princes and the miniſters, and that the dauphin had ſhewn his diſſatisfaction at it

by retiring to Meudon. Prints were ſold in which the king and madame de Maintenon were repreſented, their right hands joined, and each ſupporting with their left a globe, which ſeemed too heavy for the ſhoulders of Atlas, and theſe words beneath, *Nous Maintenons.*

Although there was not the leaſt foundation for theſe reports, yet they continued to be propagated and believed, and the woman whoſe whole ambition was to make a ſaint of a king, was looked upon by us as another Frédégonde.

If madame de Maintenon had been deſirous of governing, the king would not have ſuffered her: no prince was ever more jealous of his authority: the dominion Louvois attempted to exerciſe over him, was the ruin of this miniſter. The king perceived that madame de Maintenon had no inclination to give him counſel, and therefore thought her the more capable of giving him ſuch as was good.

He had ſo high an idea of her judgment, that he once ſaid to her, 'The 'title of Holineſs is given to popes, that 'of Majeſty to kings, to ambaſſadors that 'of Excellence, you ought to be ſtiled, 'your Solidity.' It was this ſolid judgment that kept her from meddling with affairs

affairs of ſtate, and if ſhe ever gave her opinion or hazarded her advice, it was in compliance with the king's deſire, or at the ſolicitation of her directors, more reſtleſs and more ambitious than herſelf.

Lewis ſeldom ſummoned his council: thoſe meetings where oppoſition embroiled and protracted affairs, where different ſentiments left every thing in doubt, muſt neceſſarily be diſagreeable to him. He loved celerity in buſineſs: he hated debate, and would not liſten to all, becauſe he was deſirous of ſeeing all, the ſtate therefore was generally governed by a *half-viziarſhip:* the miniſters had each their days, and did buſineſs ſeparately with him, and each was maſter of his particular department. As the bounds of their authority were exactly preſcribed, they could not incroach upon each others rights: that eager deſire for ruining one another was depreſſed: for if the method of reports hinders the prince from being enlightened, it alſo hinders the miniſters from intriguing, therefore it ſeldom happened under this reign that one miniſter ſucceeded to another, tho' it has often happened ſince.

Louvois going one day to do buſineſs with the king when he was indiſpoſed, madame de Maintenon who was in his

chamber, prepared to leave him. The king prevented her, ſaying, 'Stay, ma-'dam, monſieur de Louvois knows that 'you may be truſted, and perhaps you 'may not be unuſeful to us.' Lewis, aſſiſted by the preſence of madame de Maintenon, in whoſe eyes he always ſought the approbation which he generally found there, diſcovered ſo much judgment that day, was ſo ſuperior to Louvois, and ſo well ſatisfied with himſelf, that he reſolved to have the ſame advantage often. He made uſe of madame de Maintenon as a curb to the tyranny of his miniſters: Louvois and Seignelai murmured, the king was enraged, and to puniſh them, obliged them to do buſineſs in madame de Maintenon's apartment. The miniſters united to oppoſe this innovation: we are debaſed, exclaimed they; that they were dependant was more certain.

The king accuſtomed to be obeyed with chearfulneſs, incapable of getting over a prepoſſeſſion which he owed only to himſelf, firm againſt all obſtacles, was determined to give their jealouſy ſome real exerciſe; and madame de Maintenon, who in theſe little councils was at firſt only as a companion to the king, or aſſiſted as a witneſs to the debates, became ſoon more conſiderable.

The

The deſtiny of the ſtate was decided in her apartment, the ſame which the count de Clermont poſſeſſes now. The miniſters had no other fixed place for attending the king, who taking his place at a deſk, made them give him a minute account of the affairs intruſted to their care. Madame de Maintenon uſed often to retire to pray. When ſhe ſtaid, ſhe always placed herſelf in a corner of the room, and took her diſtaff or a book. When the king was embarraſſed by any particular affair, he would endeavour to read in her countenance what reſolution he ought to take; ſometimes he would ſay, 'What does your 'ſolidity think of this?' or, 'Madam, 'does your ſolidity approve of this?' When the miniſter was obſtinate, the king would appeal to her: *Let us conſult wiſdom*, he would ſay.

Madame de Maintenon did not love to mix in the buſineſs of the ſtate, but ſhe had a true genius for it; of which calmneſs, prudence, diſtruſt, the love of juſtice, and a patriot zeal are eſſential parts. The king who paid leſs regard to her inclinations than to her capacity, invited her every day to theſe conferences: ſhe was therefore obliged to take ſome part in them, but ſhe carefully avoided all debates, and never gave the leaſt indicati-

on of that court ſpirit which conſiſts in aiming continually to impoſe upon perſons from whom impoſition is inceſſantly dreaded. It is for this reaſon that the court praiſed her leſs than the city, which is always the beſt judge, becauſe it has leſs folly and fewer vices. At Verſailles ſome ſaid ſhe made too great uſe of her intereſt with the king: others that ſhe made too little: while at Paris, ſhe was admired for her judgment and moderation, in keeping within the bounds of her rank.

Her letters ſhew with what reluctance ſhe entered into the part they obliged her to act, and how little ſhe enjoyed it, but we ſhould not underſtand them in too ſtrict a ſenſe. We often deceive ourſelves. Madame de Maintenon had two employments, that of converting the king, and of giving him neceſſary information. Without ſeeking it ſhe acquired a great influence in all affairs, by poſſeſſing all the confidence of him who regulated them.

A taſte for the things of this world is not incompatible with the love of heavenly things. At church, in the oratory, at the feet of a crucifix, we give way to the overflowings of our hearts. We indulge the moſt exalted ſentiments of piety: we trample the world and all that belongs

to

to it under our feet. All that we write after a long meditation, in which the ſoul has converſed with God, and the imagination is inflamed by contemplating divine objects: all that we ſay, all that we think in thoſe moments, ſhew ſuch an abſolute diſingagement from the world, as makes us ſuppoſe we are incapable of entering into its divided intereſts. But when this tranſient fervor is paſt, we become mere mortals again, ſelf-love, ſome predominant paſſion, curioſity, and perhaps the neceſſity of relieving the mind fatigued with devout aſpirations, baniſh the reſolutions we have taken. We are as cautious as deſigning, as penetrating as if we were not devotees: like cardinal Berulle we hold the bible in one hand and Tacitus in the other: the moſt holy among the ſaints ſaid, as madame de Maintenon did, 'It is God who has 'placed us in this ſituation, let us endea-'vour to do as little ill as we can.'

Madame de Maintenon then entered into all affairs, becauſe ſhe underſtood them all. She governed much leſs indeed than ſhe was thought, but more than ſhe believed herſelf, and far more than ſhe deſigned. Her empire was the empire of a ſenſible woman, calm, moderate, incurious, faithful, whoſe huſband never

conſulted her, yet could not keep any ſecret hid from her.

The miniſters who knew better than herſelf the extent of her power, and who by exaggerating and fearing it, had made it really ſuperiour to their own, informed her beforehand of affairs which were to be laid before the king, conferred with her upon ſuch as were nice and difficult, in order to ſecure the conſent of the king to what they intended to propoſe, intreated her to ſupport ſuch advice as they proved to her to be beſt; and endeavoured to diſcover her ſentiments with regard to promotions, the choice of perſons for vacant employments, and many other things which are of no great conſequence, and which the men in place ſuffer the courtiers and the people to look upon as the eſſential part of power. This conduct produced its natural effect, and rendered her ſtill more moderate. *This is not in my power*, ſhe would ſay to thoſe whom the miniſters directed to her: *theſe are affairs of ſtate in which I never concern myſelf.* This play of policy ſent back all affairs and ſolicitations to the miniſters, who had one reaſon more for regulating them as they thought fit, and for diſpatching them more ſlowly.

The

The king would have admitted her to the council, but ſhe refuſed that diſtinction; ſhe appeared there twice, but either becauſe ſhe was leſs jealous of her authority than the king's honour, or that ſhe feared a return of his diſtruſt, for Lewis, tho' ſometimes complaiſant to her wiſhes, was always impatient of control, or that her candor was ſhocked by the mean uniformity of opinions there, ſhe appeared to be greatly diſguſted with it. 'They 'required ſecrecy of me, ſaid ſhe, but the 'affairs under deliberation were of ſo lit-'tle importance, they were diſcuſſed 'with ſo little attention, and with ſuch 'apparent inſincerity, that ſecrecy is 'more neceſſary for the honour of the 'miniſters, than for the advantage of the 'buſineſs they were upon.'

She was often deſired to be preſent at theſe conſultations, but ſhe had a greater aſcendant over Lewis in private: ſometimes ſhe was his ſecretary, and ſometimes he was hers.

A vaſt number of petitions were preſented to her, which ſhe laid before the king, who would ſometimes anſwer them favourably, and ſometimes he would ſay to her, 'I will not allow any one to ſpeak 'to me about buſineſs but my miniſters.'

Theſe jealouſies of authority were immediately attoned for by the moſt unlimited confidence. Madame de Maintenon received it like one who expected a return of his jealouſy. Till ſhe was accuſtomed to his denying her favours, ſhe was greatly afflicted at it; but always perſuaded that ſhe was born for others, always ſevere to herſelf, ſhe endeavoured to leſſen her ſenſibility: and during ſix and twenty years no complaints ever eſcaped her. She deſired every favour with extreme ardor, ſhe was enraged at the leaſt reſiſtance, but ſhe repreſſed her impatience, and ſtifled her murmurs. When the king named perſons to fill vacant places, he always deſired to know her opinion of the ſeveral candidates, but very ſeldom choſe him whom ſhe preferred to the others. Madame de Maintenon was at firſt ſurpriſed at this ſeeming contradiction; the king who ſuſpected ſhe was angry, would appeaſe her by ſaying, 'Do you, madam, like any 'other better? let me know, you need 'only ſpeak.' 'Sire, ſhe replied, he 'who will ſerve you beſt, will beſt pleaſe 'me.'

On certain occaſions ſhe would venture to propoſe her friend, but always with an indifference that left the king entirely at liberty to admit or exclude him:

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at length ſhe obtained every thing ſhe deſired, but it was by always ſeeming to deſire nothing ardently. Her ſchemes for her friends had ſo often failed; the king was ſubject to ſuch ſudden viciſſitudes of temper; ſo many affairs conducted with the utmoſt prudence, had ſucceeded ill from trifles, impoſſible to foreſee, that ſhe reſolved no more to have any opinion or inclination of her own. When ſhe was conſulted upon any promotion, ſhe laid the reaſons that might be urged on both ſides impartially before him, and the king whoſe underſtanding was ſtrengthened by the aſſiſtance he borrowed from hers, regulated affairs by her judgment while he thought he was following his own.

Memorials againſt the miniſters were often addreſſed to her: ſhe was too candid to betray them, and had courage enough to offend them. She therefore gave theſe memorials to the king, and generally when they were preſent. When ſhe diſcovered in the miniſters any acts of injuſtice, any palpable falſhoods, ſhe was at no pains to conceal her reſentment, for ſhe was not afraid of theirs; and believing it more honourable to be hated than to hate, ſhe uſed to recal them to their duty by ſevere reprimands. None of them conteſted with her the right of taking a particular intereſt in the glory

of the king and the happineſs of his people. At court it is the miſtreſs who is perfidious; the wife alone is importunate.

In all reports that were to be made to his majeſty, the ſecretaries of ſtate found a watchful ſpy in her, who retained them in their duty. She kept a journal of every thing that paſſed, that being well informed of each particular fact, when occaſion required it, ſhe could recal them all. This book rendered always preſent to her mind every circumſtance of a deſign, diſperſed in the ſeveral articles of different diſtricts, and this combination made it eaſy for her to give the moſt proper advice. She would often, when concealed behind a curtain, interrupt her prayer or her work, to follow the diſcuſſion of an affair which excited her curioſity, or engaged her attention: and ſometimes from the end of the cloſet a voice would proceed, which corrected the miſtakes, or diſcovered the impoſitions of the miniſter. Madame de Maintenon entered not into theſe deliberations, but as a citizen, or as one to whoſe memory many facts of importance were committed.

The journal of audiences was a ſecret between the king and her. When the report was made, they collected together the

the principal matters, and madame de Maintenon wrote the reſolutions that had been taken, with the reaſons for them. There alſo ſhe placed an extract of ſuch affairs as the miniſter was not employed in, and the news of the court, by which the reſolutions of the council were likely to be influenced. Lewis, who was the moſt laborious of kings, conſulted theſe papers every day: he there ſaw with one glance the whole train of affairs, and even added in the margin, anecdotes or reflections of his own.

This valuable journal has probably had the ſame fate with many other papers which madame de Maintenon condemned to the fire. Unleſs monſieur de . . . . . preſerved it from thence, as he did a bag which contained the minutes of letters which the king threw there likewiſe, ſuppoſing them uſeleſs, but which this nobleman preſerves in his cabinet as an indelible witneſs of the ſpirit, the underſtanding, and extreme application of Lewis the fourteenth.

CHAP-

CHAPTER II.

The works at Maintenon.

HOWEVER that may be, the marquis de Louvois was too reſtleſs, too active not to be weary of the ſlow windings, that all affairs were ſeen to take, and too haughty to cringe to a woman whom he had often ſeen a ſuppliant in his antichamber, reſolved to conquer madame de Maintenon, and employ againſt his particular enemy what he ſhould have employed againſt the enemies of the ſtate, an immenſe ſum of money, thirty thouſand men, and Vauban.

Verſailles which in the reign of Lewis the thirteenth was only a dog-kennel, had by Colbert been made a moſt inchanting place. Louvois not contented with improving, was reſolved to force nature. All the water was drawn from a pond by a pump, which raiſed it, and filled canals that diſtributed it into all the neceſſary places: but this water ſtagnated, and had an offenſive ſmell: he therefore formed the deſign of bringing the river Eure to Verſailles by an aqueduct which ſhould conduct it from the mountain of Pirardon to

to the reſervoirs. This deſign amazed all the engineers who did not think it was poſſible to execute it, however Louvois compleated it, and the Eure ran twenty leagues againſt its courſe, to carry the abundance of its waters to the fountains of Verſailles. A whole army was employed in theſe works, two mountains oppoſite to Maintenon, were joined together by eight and forty arches built for eternity. Of Pontgoin at Beſchere, they made a canal of twenty thouſand fathoms in length. This canal which was ſifteen feet broad at the top as well as at the bottom, was twice as deep, and more, where the lowneſs of the ground, or the neceſſity of making proper banks required it. In the marſhes of Berchere, they made a cauſeway or aqueduct of earth, which was carried by men, the length of 3607 fathoms to the aqueduct of brick built, near Maintenon. Another was made in the marſhes of Maintenon, two hundred and ſixteen feet in heigth, through which the rivers of Eure and Gailardon paſſed. Three arches raiſed one upon another as at Pont du Gard, equalled the aſtoniſhing works of the Romans; and the rapidity with which they were executed, ſeemed to partake of thoſe miraculous works inſtantaniouſly produced by the gods of the inchanted world. With all theſe prodigies of art was the eſtate of Madame de Maintenon embelliſhed.

Madame

Madame de Maintenon entered into this ſcheme with all the ardour, with which ſhe would have oppoſed it, if ſhe had foreſeen the inconveniencies it produced. The digging up the earth, the cutting of the ſtones, occaſioned dangerous diſtempers among the workmen. Louvois ſtill went on, his flinty heart could not be ſoftened. 'Let them die, 'ſaid he, by digging the earth before a 'fortreſs of the enemies, or by digging it 'in the plains of Beauſes: where is the 'difference? they die in the ſervice of 'the king.'

Madame de Maintenon was expoſed to the moſt outrageous murmurs. 'See, 'cried they, this boaſted humility! Clag-'ny exhauſted the royal treaſury, but 'Clagny was not cemented with the blood 'of the people. A whole army muſt 'periſh at Maintenon: we hoped ſhe 'would have corrected in the king, this 'inordinate paſſion for building, but ſhe 'has joined with Louvois to ſooth it. 'All who are about our maſters, are to be 'wicked, or become ſo.'

While madame de Maintenon was thus perſecuted by the rage of calumny, ſhe was endeavouring to prevent thoſe misfortunes which laid waſte her little empire

pire, ſhe diſtributed money among the ſoldiers, ſhe ordered great care to be taken of the ſick, and by her charity partly repaired the evils Louvais had been the cauſe of through his deſire to advance by ſome years the pleaſures of his maſter.

The king's parties at Maintenon laſted three days: he uſed to take none but his favourites with him, which occaſioned great jealouſy among the courtiers, and many murmurs againſt madame de Maintenon to whom theſe odious diſtinctions were attributed. But ſhe was unjuſtly cenſured, the ſmallneſs of the caſtle was the cauſe; the king found it difficult to accommodate the few attendants he carried with him, and madame de Maintenon would not ſuffer the caſtle to be enlarged, either becauſe ſhe was deſirous of avoiding diſagreeable compariſons, or that ſhe was afraid of the expence. There was nothing either rich or rare in the furniture: ſhe had only to expreſs a wiſh, and all that the Indies had moſt rich, France moſt elegant, and England moſt perfect, would have inſtantly adorned her houſe. The king's frequent viſit to it would have authoriſed this magnificence, but the fineſt apartment in the caſtle was hung with damaſk only, and ſhe aſked if that was not too rich, ſo great

great was her fear leſt ſhe ſhould imitate the luxury of her own age: her moderation, her humility ſuch, as may well make the preſent bluſh.

CHAPTER III.

Knights of the Order of the Holy-Ghoſt.

MADAME de Maintenon pleaſed with the works that were carried on upon her eſtate, was reconciled to Louvois, who had projected and conducted them. The miniſter was by this means maſter of the promotions to the order of the Holy-Ghoſt. It was to conſiſt of ſeventy four Knights, and had never been ſo numerous before. Louvois took upon himſelf the care of compleating this number: by which he propoſed to oblige the ungrateful, and to pacify the malecontents.

Madame de Maintenon only recommended the count d'Aubigné her brother, the marquis de Montchevreuil, and Villarceaux. No one was aſtoniſhed that this honour ſhould be beſtowed upon the firſt, but Villarceaux's paſſion for madame Scaron, was remembred, and the malicious publick did not ſcruple to ſay, that he

he and Montchevreuil owed their promotion to the gallantries of madame Scaron, the one for having talked of them, the other for having concealed them.

When the liſt was publiſhed, it was ſeverely criticiſed.* But it is worthy remark that France had ſo many men of diſtinguiſhed merit, that a liſt as numerous might have been compoſed of thoſe to whom the publick voice gave the honour of the order, and that ſeventy-four knights might have been named in the ſame day who would not have debaſed it.

The king offered the blue ribbon to the prince of Soubiſe, upon condition that he would take rank after the dukes. The prince refuſed it, and deſired that his refuſal might be regiſtred in the archives of the order. The dukes diſputed with the family of Lorrain for precedence. The

* *Le roi que ſa bonté réduit à mille épreuves,*
Pour ſoulager les chevaliers nouveaux,
En a diſpenſé vingt de porter des manteaux,
Et trente de faire des preuves.

'The king whoſe bounty tries each care,
'How beſt to eaſe the upſtart knights,
'Allows a ſcore no clokes to wear,
'A ſcore and ten to bring no rights.

king ſaid to them. 'I have read your 'memorial: I find that the princes of 'Lorrain have often preceded you; if 'reaſon is for you, cuſtom is againſt you.' 'There is one thing, ſaid the duke of 'Luxembourg, which I am not able to 'conceive.' 'What is that? ſaid the 'king. 'That a Bourbon, replied the 'duke, can ſuffer a Guiſe in his pre-'ſence.'

The prince of Monaco conſented to take rank as duke of Valentinois. The king praiſed his moderation, and the prince of Armagnac, and the count of Soiſſons bluſhed for not having imitated it.

CHAPTER IV.

The king and Queen of England.

EUROPE was now threatened with a general diſorder. The marquis de Louvois blew up every where the flames of war, that by giving the king employment he might free himſelf from that dependence, to which during peace he had been obliged to ſubmit: the reunion of the chambers of Metz and Bezançon, the invaſion of Straſbourg and Caſal, two fortified towns which

which belonged to Spain. The haughtineſs with which the king had maintained the rights of exemption, which all other catholick princes had relinguiſhed, as if he reſolved to reign in the midſt of Rome it ſelf, had irritated all the European powers. A formidable league was formed againſt him, and it ſeemed highly probable that the emperor, when he had ſubdued the Turks, would declare himſelf head of this league and turn his arms againſt France. Louvois repreſented to the king the neceſſity of preventing theſe dangers.

From the Hague William of Orange carried on intrigues in every court of Europe. The battle of Saint Denis, which was fought after the peace was ſigned, had ſufficiently ſhewn what was to be expected from him. Gourville having expreſſed his aſtoniſhment at this action. William ever prodigal of human blood, told, him that he could not deny himſelf the ſatisfaction of giving this laſt leſſon of his art.

I know not what our heroes will think of this ſpeech, but if it be true, William was only fit to command an army of wolves and to be devoured by them. He wrote to Lewis and requeſted his friendſhip, and this was the king's anſwer to him: 'I have received the letter in

'which

'which you deſire my friendſhip: I will 'grant it you, when you are worthy of 'it, and with this hope I beſeech God to 'have you in his holy care.' When the prince read this letter he ſaid: 'I find 'I am not to have his friendſhip, well 'then I will have his eſteem.'

While James II. governed by a bigotted wife, and an inhuman chancellor, forbid a nation to profeſs the proteſtant religion, which had allowed him to be a catholick, the prince of Orange his nephew, and his ſon-in-law, was invited into England by a powerful faction, and laid a ſcheme for making a deſcent there. The ſtates-general refuſed to create a fund for the ſupport of nine thouſand ſailors: the prince went to the aſſembly, and made this ſhort ſpeech. 'Gentle-'men, we ſhall have a war next ſpring: 'I deſire that this prediction may be re-'giſtred.'

The count d'Avaux * penetrated into all his deſigns and diſcovered all his meaſures.

* See his *negotiations* printed by privilege at Paris in 1753. Although they might have ſpared this diſgrace to our Dutch penſioners, and have prevented the publication of a book which by unveiling all the myſteries of our policy hinder us at preſent from putting the ſame ſprings in motion with equal ſucceſs. A member of

meaſures. Barillon diſcredited the advices ſent by the Count d'Avaux, who filled the king of France with real apprehenſions, while Barillon lulled the king of England with falſe hopes. James, repeatedly warned by Lewis of the dangers that threatened his throne, thought himſelf ſecurely fixed there. He continued his endeavours to reunite his ſubjects to the holy See, and the pope in the mean time gave two hundred thouſand ducats to William, to ſecure the ſucceſs of an armament, which was to deſtroy popery in England.

The prince of Orange at length ſet ſail with nine hundred proteſtant officers, whom he had diſtributed in the ſeveral Battalions, and with marſhal Schomberg who was an army in himſelf. The elements ſeemed to declare againſt his enterpriſe. He was obliged to put into the *Oct.* 1688.

of the States-general, corrupted by France, will for the future ſell his conſcience at a higher price: he will ſay that there can be no dependence upon the ſecrecy of our court, he will be apprehenſive of being one day made infamous like his grandfather, by the papers of his corrupter which will be publiſhed without any precaution, when theſe *negotiations* appeared in Holland, the magiſtrates ordered a mutilated edition of it to be publiſhed, and the court of the Hague, a faithful tranſlation in Dutch, to let the people know what their deputies have ever been.

ports

ports of Holland: Innocent the eleventh cauſed a thouſand maſſes to be ſaid for the happy voyage of the heretick, as if to pay a kind of homage to a religion which this Pontiff betrayed. At length the fleet landed at Torbay: England received William as its deliverer, and caſt out James as its tyrant.

Seignelai had offered the king forty veſſels, which might have been equipped ſoon enough to block up the dutch fleet. Louvois oppoſed it, and inſiſted that it was more neceſſary to make a diverſion. Inſtead of laying ſiege to Maſtricht, which would have given the Dutch ſufficient employment: they inveſted Philipſbourg, which united the whole empire againſt
Decem. France. War was now declared againſt
3. the united provinces: if Holland had been attacked ſooner, it is probable that William would have failed in his enterpriſe.

The count de Lauzun, who, to make his way again to Verſailles, had engaged in the affairs of king James, took upon himſelf the care of conducting to France that prince and his queen, to whom William had ſent orders to quit England. From Calais the count de Lauzun wrote to the king that James had commanded him to deliver his queen into no other hands

hands but his, and that he thought himſelf very unfortunate in not being allowed to appear before his majeſty. Lewis permitted him to return to court, and intreated the princeſs de Montpenſier to approve of this reward for his aſſiſtance to the diſtreſſed queen.

The queen of England's arrival put all Verſailles into motion; the court was as ſeriouſly employed in ſettling the ceremonial, as the council in taking meaſures for reſtoring her huſband to his crown.

Madame de Maintenon did not diſdain to enter into theſe little affairs; the jealouſy of rank to which every thing is ſacrificed had no place in her mind. The queen of England ſaluted her, and gave her the ſtool, but half of this honour was allowed to dutcheſſes. When madame de Maintenon went to viſit her, the queen who was not ready, made her wait a moment, made a thouſand apologies for it, and received her in her cloſet, where no other perſon was admitted.

A few days afterwards king James, arrived: Lewis, whoſe protection he had deſpiſed ſome months before, received him as he would have done the moſt fortunate prince in the world. The devotees were

rejoiced to see a confessor as king: the jesuits transported that this confessor was of their order flattered themselves that by becoming necessary to him, they would be so to Lewis also.

The courtiers saw nothing in James the second but an ungraceful man, who wore his sword aukwardly, and buried his head in a hat of an enormous size, who, instead of reflecting upon his misfortunes, went to thank mother Agnes, a carmelite, for having been the first who endeavoured to bring him back to a religion to which he owed them all. Those who remembered to have seen him a libertine in his youth, were not surprised at his attachment to this kind of religion. The nation was not interested in the unhappy fate of a prince who seemed insensible of it himself, and whose precipitate flight left vacant a throne, under the ruins of which he ought to have buried himself.

The politicians were divided in their sentiments concerning this flight, which the brave loudly condemned. Some said, that it was prudent not to trust himself in the hands of a nation always fierce and brutal, then mad with rage; that the regicide of Charles the first was too dreadful a warning to James the second, who was more criminal than he had been, and that William was not more just or more merciful than Cromwell.

Others

Others ſaid, that the prince of Orange would have obliged his father-in-law to redreſs the grievances of the oppreſſed people, to renounce the alliance with France, and perhaps to quit a religion which in his hands was an inſtrument of tyranny: it might have coſt ſome miniſters and ſome miſſionaries their heads, but the conſtitution of England, formed of three powers, would have armed itſelf againſt the abettors of tyranny, and ſhielded the perſon of the tyrant. The horror they felt for a paricide committed upon the father, would have ſecured the life of the ſon. The prince of Orange, after having reſtored liberty to the people, and fixed juſt bounds to the royal authority, would have repaſſed the ſea with the glorious title of *the protector of nations.*

Theſe conjectures were juſtified by the conſequences of the revolution, by the ſnares that William laid for James to induce him to fly; by the compaſſion of the people for their fugitive maſter, and by the great indifference with which the ſtates of the kingdom, under the name of a convention, proceeded to the election of the prince of Orange.

However that may be, Lewis, whoſe vanity was ſoothed by having a king a-

mong his courtiers, and who was jealous of the glory of reſtoring him to his throne, was the only one who ſeemed to be ſenſible of his misfortunes. He gave him a magnificent reception, he treated him with the utmoſt tenderneſs, and often ſaid, 'I 'will have more honours ſhewn him, than 'if he ſtill reigned.' It was reported that an Engliſh nobleman, who attended the king in his flight, wrote to one of his friends at London : *dixit dominus domino meo : ſede à dextris meis, donec ponam inimicos tuos ſcabellum pedum tuorum.*

The king was confirmed in theſe generous ſentiments by madame de Maintenon, who contracted a ſtrict friendſhip with the queen of England ; that princeſs had, like her, a great deal of wit, but more zeal than piety, and more artifice than prudence ; ſhe reigned with great haughtineſs in England ; to madame de Maintenon ſhe behaved with the deepeſt humility. The marchioneſs de Sevigné deſcribes her with black eyes, which were not the leſs beautiful for having wept, finely ſhaped, her complexion extremely fair, her mouth ornamented with the fineſt teeth in the world, lean, pale, but great ſenſibility in her countenance, in her manners great dignity and politeneſs. Lewis the fourteenth, ſhewing great fondneſs to the prince of Wales, the queen ſaid to him,

'I

'I have envied the deſtiny of my ſon, who 'is not ſenſible of his misfortunes; but 'now I pity him, becauſe he does not 'know your goodneſs.'

James implored the aſſiſtance of the pope and the emperor: the firſt anſwered him, that he pitied his misfortunes, but that he had occaſion for his troops againſt France; and the ſecond, that if he had followed his advice, he would not have been reduced to ſuch humble intreaties. The king of Spain refuſed to hear his miniſter. All the ſovereigns of Europe beheld with indifference a fall which ought to have excited their reſentment, or awakened their apprehenſions. The civilians propoſed this queſtion: *Has a nation a right to rebel againſt that authority which would force it to receive a new faith?*

The king enabled James II. to make a 1689.
deſcent into Ireland. Louvois, who ſought to ingroſs all power to himſelf, demanded the direction of this expedition; Seignelay refuſed to yield it to him, and claimed it in right of his office as ſecrery of ſtate for the affairs of the marine. Madame de Maintenon favoured Seignelay's pretenſions, not that ſhe had any friendſhip for him, but ſhe was intimately connected with his ſiſters the dutcheſſes

de Chevreuſe and de Beauvilliers. She headed the party againſt Louvois, cauſed the direction of the affairs of Ireland to be taken from him and given to Seignelay, and received the queen of England's thanks for what ſhe had done.

However the expedition went on more ſlowly for this conteſt. Louvois who had been blamed for not having given credit to the report of the deſigned invaſion of England by the prince of Orange, which every one knew, was reſolved, that ſince he had neglected to prevent this misfortune, Seignelay ſhould not have the honour of repairing his fault: and ſeconding but weakly thoſe deſigns in which he ought to have concurred, he made it impoſſible for the enterprize to ſucceed.

While king James was fighting in Ireland, or made a ſemblance to fight, his wife remained at Saint Germains, plunged in the deepeſt affliction. The advices ſhe received from the ſiege of Londonderry were not likely to dry up her tears: every inſtance of reſpect was ſhewn to her, all her deſires were prevented, magnificent entertainments were formed for her, but ſhe could be no where happy without a crown.

Lewis, the moſt polite, the moſt generous of kings, endeavoured to ſoften her affliction

affliction by every thing which he thought could be moſt agreeable to her: he ſuppreſſed the humiliating reflection of what ſhe was become, not by recalling to her remembrance, with officious reſpect what ſhe had been, but by an uniform delicacy of behaviour perſuading her that ſhe was all ſhe had formerly been: every day ſome new preſent informed her, that ſhe was not forgot, and becauſe ſhe was no leſs pious than unhappy, theſe preſents had always ſome relation to devotion. At Marly, at Trianon, he condoled with her, or endeavoured to prevail upon her to be chearful with him: in a word, his behaviour ſhewed ſo much tender attention to the afflicted princeſs, that it was believed he had entertained a paſſion for her.

At Paris, it was confidently reported, that this connexion gave madame de Maintenon great uneaſineſs, and certainly not without good reaſon, ſays madame de la Fayette: for a miſtreſs will always have more influence than a friend Thoſe who were better acquainted with the court, perceived to what principle the king's exceſſive complaiſance was owing: novelty greatly contributed to it: compaſſion, that it might appear more generous, borrowed the air of ſentiments leſs humiliating, and the benefactor ſeemed to be

only a friend. It was to madame de Maintenon that the queen owed the obliging aſſiduities of Lewis: that princeſs was more apprehenſive of tiring the king by her importunities, than of inſpiring madame de Maintenon with the jealouſy of a rival. Theſe two ladies were almoſt always together; they were not ignorant of the idle talk of the court, and ſmiled at the deſigns and mutual diſtruſt which were attributed to them.

James the ſecond had enemies at Verſailles, although he had no friends there; by ſome malicious incendiary Lewis was told that this prince appeared diſſatisfied with him; that he had complained that the court inſulted his diſtreſs, and that he ſeemed inſenſible to all that was doing to reſtore him to his crown.

Lewis too credulous was cooled with this report: his kindneſs to the queen ceaſed on a ſudden, ſhe was excluded from the diverſions at court, ſhe was received with coldneſs, but little attention was ſhewn to her grief, and what was worſe than all, the ſuccours for Ireland went on but ſlowly. The public conſtant to its ignorant malignity, imputed this change to madame de Maintenon: the queen diſcovered the cauſe of it in the unfavourable impreſſions which the king had been given againſt

againſt her huſband. Overwhelmed with grief, ſhe went to weep and complain to her only friend. Madame de Maintenon comforted her, and promiſed to undeceive the king. 'That is not ſufficient, ſaid 'the queen to her, my huſband has been 'repreſented as ungrateful, he who is 'the moſt grateful of men; they have 'charged him with being haughty, he 'who is the humbleſt, as well as the 'moſt humbled of princes. I expect 'from his majeſty's juſtice, that he will 'not be ſatisfied with declaring to you 'and to me, that he does not believe 'the ſlander, but that he will take 'meaſures to diſcover the author of it, that 'the reparation may be as public as 'the calumny. My huſband is abſent, 'it belongs to the king to revenge 'him, and not to permit him to be 'injured with impunity. You have 'always been the beſt of my friends, but 'on this occaſion you will be the only 'one. Shew madam that you were in 'the right, when you declared that it 'was not poſſible for a king of England 'to be ungrateful.'

Madame de Maintenon prevailed upon the king to examine into the affair: the incendiary was named, and obliged to retract what he had ſaid. The queen appeared again at Verſailles, but James drew

no advantage from the ſuccours of his ally; he raiſed the ſiege of Londonderry, and returned to Saint Germains, from whence he attacked by conſpiracies an enemy ſo well guarded, that it was eaſier to ſubdue than to aſſaſſinate him. Lewis ſettled a penſion of ſix hundred thouſand livres upon king James; the low ſtate of the finances ſometimes retarded the payments. Madame de Maintenon uſed to ſolicit the king for them: and the queen in a letter ſhe once wrote to her upon that occaſion, ſays, 'I thank 'you, madam, for the alms (for we 'ought to call things by their names) 'that you have obtained of the king for 'us.'

Their friendſhip continued unalterable in ſpite of reaſons of ſtate, difference of condition and inclinations, and of reports which tended either to deſtroy or leſſen their confidence in each other. The queen was continually ſoliciting, and madame de Maintenon always obtaining. When the misfortunes into which France was plunged deprived this princeſs of all hope, and reduced her to be nothing more than a recluſe in the monaſtery of Chaillot, ſhe often ſuffered refuſals, ſhe ſeldom obtained an audience of the king, but ſhe ſupported with fortitude this new ſtroke of fortune, and appeared worthy to reign

reign ever ſince ſhe had ceaſed to be a queen. Her magnanimity was not leſſened by her gratitude, nor her gratitude by thoſe juſt and mortifying reflections upon the inſolence of benefactors: reflections which ſlightly glance upon a generous heart, but which make deep impreſſions upon an ungrateful one.

Time did not abate the compaſſion of madame de Maintenon for the misfortunes of her friend; they were always new, and always preſent to her mind. When theſe two ladies were ſeen together, one fallen from a rank to which the other durſt not aſpire, emuloufly ſtruggling to aſſume a behaviour ſuitable to their condition, one concealing her greatneſs, the other endeavouring to make hers be forgot, both abaſing themſelves by a refinement of pride, each exalting the other by deference and reſpect, one ſtill aſtoniſhed at her elevation, the other at her fall, Madame de Maintenon refuſing the pleaſing diſtinctions of eſteem, and the queen rejecting the homage of reſpect. Well might marſhal Villeroi ſay, 'Are 'they aſhamed that they are the wives of 'kings?'

CHAPTER V.

Father de la Chaiſe *in diſgrace, and reſtored again to favour.*

FATHER de la Chaiſe was as ſolicitous to ſtrengthen himſelf with the intereſt of madame de Maintenon, as were the queen of England and the marquis de Louvois. The king now entered into an age when confeſſors may pretend to make revolutions. Father de la Chaiſe had made himſelf maſter of the affairs of the church, which by the diſputes that often aroſe between the court of France and the court of Rome were become affairs of ſtate.

Father de la Chaiſe found himſelf a miniſter of ſtate without having perceived or expected it. He did buſineſs regularly with the king, and immediately ſaw all the lords and all the prelates at his feet. The janſeniſts murmured greatly at the audiences given on Saturdays; they ſung pſalms, they faſted, they prayed, that the government of the church might be taken from its enemy, who however was only theirs.

Father

Father de la Chaiſe gave very honeſt but ill-timed counſels; the king followed them, and afterſtards repented that he had done ſo. Provoked at the ill ſucceſs of the affair, concerning the electorate of Cologn, he ſhewed his diſpleaſure at it to the jeſuit, by whoſe advice he had been guilty of two very conſiderable faults; one was by amuſing himſelf in ſupporting with too much heat the right of exemption, and loſing on that account the opportunity of getting an elector who would have been devoted to him: and the other was by inſiſting unſeaſonably upon the cardinal de Furſtemberg's being elected biſhop of Liege, and refuſing to conſent to the election of cardinal de Bouillon, whom the chapter had earneſtly recommended.

The king reminding father de la Chaiſe of theſe faults, the confeſſor laid the blame upon the marquis de Louvois. The king in great rage told him that an enterpriſe ſuggeſted by jeſuits had never ſucceeded, and that it would be better if they confined themſelves to teaching their ſcholars, and not preſume to meddle in ſtate affairs. Lewis ſo ſeldom ſuffered himſelf to be tranſported with anger; he was ſo little accuſtomed to reproach his miniſters with unſucceſsful councils, which he thought was a tacit acknowledgement of his own readineſs to be guided by others,

others, that the confeſſor believed himſelf abſolutely undone. It was paſt a doubt, when he found that his maſter always ſaw him with angry looks for the ſpace of a month, and he continued to do buſineſs with him, like a man who was uncertain whether he ſhould be permitted to do it long.

Fear is a neceſſary curb to the power of favourites; father de la Chaiſe never made a better uſe of his than at this very critical time; the diſtribution of benefices was never more equitable, and the diſtributer was never leſs haughty.

However the ſociety alarmed at his danger, deliberated already concerning the choice of perſons to be preſented to the king to ſucceed him. Father de la Chaiſe, in whoſe heart all the apprehenſions of his order were collected, ran to the apartment of madame de Maintenon, repreſented to her all that he had done, all that he had deſigned to do, complained that ſuch long and faithful ſervices ſhould be ſo ill-rewarded, and that he ſhould be made anſwerable for events which depended only upon fortune.

Madame de Maintenon, in great ſurpriſe, interrupted him, and deſired to know what this diſcourſe tended to: 'To

'prevail

'prevail upon you, resumed the confessor, to lay the storm with which I am threatened, and to appease the king.' 'Banish your fears, replied madame de Maintenon, he is not angry; and yesterday he complained that you avoid him; go to him, he has forgot all, and is now only apprehensive that you have a better memory than himself.'

The bishopric of Cahors, which was given to the abbé de la Luserne, sealed the renonciliation between the king and his confessor. 'Sire, said father de la Chaise to the king, I never durst mention the abbé de la Luserne to you, after his brother had married my neice.'

His power was now increased, and no longer had any bounds, but what the vigilance of a prince incessantly occupied with affairs was capable of putting to it. His enemies said that this power was unlimited, and asked if the kingdom was to be governed by jesuits. And why not be governed by them? heretic or orthodox, weak or of great abilities, secretary of state, or valet-de-chambre, whoever has the means of reigning, acquires a right to it, and favour belongs to those who have had the art of procuring it.

CHAP.

CHAPTER VI.

The Dauphineſs.

THE dauphineſs had loſt her favour with the king and Jane her buffoon had predicted it to her, perceiving that the princeſs prefered the converſation of Beſſola her Foſter ſiſter, to the moſt ſplendid entertainments of the court. She ſaid to her. 'Madam, the king will be tired at length 'of this conduct, and if he abandons 'you, Jane will have more conſequence 'than you.'

The king made an offer to the dauphineſs of marrying Beſſola to a man of quality: the dauphineſs replied, 'She 'will love her huſband, perhaps ſhe may 'love him as much as ſhe does me, and 'certainly ſhe will not love him leſs, 'and then I ſhould die with jealouſy!' The king proteſted that there ſhould be no more Beſſola's in France, and afterwards the dutcheſs of Burgundy, was not allowed to keep mademoiſelle de Marquet longer than ſix months.

Hunting, billiards, and Saint-Cyr were by turns the innocent amuſements of the king.

king. Once in fifteen days he uſed to go to Marly, and there he was always free, always kind and obliging. The dauphineſs was never of theſe parties: the prince of Orange was forgot. The embarraſſing pomp of royalty was laid aſide without ſuſpending its duties: buſineſs had nothing to apprehend from amuſement. However the balls at court were melancholy enough, and laſted only two hours: the dauphineſs never appeared at them, ſhe could not be prevailed upon to give one moment to complaiſance or pleaſure. The princeſs of Conti did not venture to ſtay too long leſt her malicious eyes ſhould betray her, and madame de Maintenon chide her, for it was her whom the king always employed to denounce his anger to any of the royal family that had offended him: madame de Maintenon uſed to ſoften the ſeverity of Lewis, minds would have been alienated from each other, Madame de Maintenon always gentle, always conciliating, reunited them: the king's anger would have occaſioned great terrors and uneaſineſs: ſhe removed their apprehenſions, and ſoftened their grief.

It is certain that ſhe expoſed herſelf to the hatred of the princes, who weary of her repeated admonitions, might, inſtead of a ſolid and reſolute friend, have conſidered her

her only as a troubleſome ſpy upon their conduct: but ſhe rather choſe to hazard their diſpleaſure, than to ſee them upon ill terms with the king. She gave offence to ſome of them, but ſhe ſerved them all faithfully. They murmured againſt her at firſt, but ſoon began to find they had been obliged, and gratitude took the place of reſentment and diſtruſt. They conſulted her in all their affairs, through her they ſolicited the king, they ſubmitted their differences to her arbitration. An ordinary favourite would have been vain of ſuch unlimited confidence, and have taken no care to merit it, ſhe was fatigued by it, yet entered with ardour into their concerns, 'I am juſt come, ſaid ſhe one 'day, from being drawn by four princes, 'which is worſe than being drawn by 'four horſes.'

Their fears of her being declared queen, were deſtroyed by their admiration of her virtues, and ſhe increaſed her power by the ſolicitude ſhe ſhewed to repreſs it. If her marriage had been made publick, the king who had been charmed by her diſintereſtedneſs, would have been diſguſted by her ambition: the princes loved her ſincerely, yet they had all been either her open or her ſecret enemies: if ſhe had been declared queen, ſhe would indeed have had more exteriour honours

paid

paid her, but ſhe would have loſt that confidence, and that veneration ſo ſoothing to ſelf-love, becauſe it was paid to her merit alone: it is probable alſo, that if Lewis had been obliged to treat her as ſomething more than a friend, he would have treated her as he had done his wife. Thus, whether we ſuppoſe her ambitious or vain, or believe her humble and moderate, the little affectations of royalty which have been attributed to her, are equally deſtroyed.

The king's three daughters who were generally called the *princeſſes* had frequent differences with each other. Their father intreated them to live together as ſiſters ſhould: 'If you continue your 'quarrels, ſaid he to them, you have 'palaces of your own where it is fitter 'you ſhould reſide than at court.'

Madame de Maintenon reſtored peace among them, every thing now wore a new face, they viſited each other frequently; they ſhewed themſelves in publick, and their behaviour to each other had now an appearance of unreſerved friendſhip and eſteem. Unfortunately this union ſo ſeldom found in private families, in that of princes ſcarce poſſible, was interrupted by the dauphin and dauphineſs.

He

He was jealous of her affection for Beſſola; ſhe of his paſſion for the counteſs du Roure, who however had yet only glances from him. The dauphin was offended at her repeated complaints; ſhe uſed to paſs whole days in her cloſet inacceſſible to every one; ſhe would affect to ſpeak generally in the German language before her huſband, who one day ſaid to her: 'If you are diſſatisfied with my conduct, 'madame, I expect that you ſhould cloſe 'your eyes, be ſilent, or complain only to 'God or to me.'

The king's affection for this princeſs was greatly abated, and although madame de Maintenon had often ſpared her ſome very ſevere reproaches, yet ſhe had heard enough to convince her that ſhe could never regain the king's eſteem; ſhe had been accuſed of preferring the intereſt of the duke of Bavaria her brother, to that of her father-in-law and her husband; ſhe had not been able to conceal the ſatisfaction ſhe felt at the misfortunes of cardinal de Furſtemberg, who was competitor with prince Clément, and ſhe was ſuſpected of having revealed to her family ſecrets of great conſequence.

It is not very likely that the king gave abſolute credit to theſe reports, but ſuſpicions

picions which are rejected through a fear of conviction, always leave indelible traces upon the mind: it appeared to him, that the dauphineſs was at leaſt guilty of having given room for calumny, by not plainly enough preferring the good of the country where ſhe was to reign, to that where ſhe was born. Hence thoſe perpetual uneaſineſſes, thoſe diſguſts, and that mutual diſtruſt, the moſt cruel puniſhment imaginable to ſuch perſons as are obliged to live together and to ſhew reſpect to each other.

The king by the open preference he gave Madame de Maintenon to her, added to her uneaſineſs by raiſing her jealouſy :* ſhe no longer beheld around her that croud which ſhe had diſdained; ſhe poſſeſſed no more that degree of favour with the king which makes perſons of her rank intereſt themſelves in the happineſs of the ſtate; ſhe had fled from the diverſions of the court; they now fled her in return: her health ſeemed impaired; a deeper melancholy was impreſt upon her countenance; ſhe ſhun'd ſociety with more ſolicitude than ever, and loſt that dignity of ſentiment, that conſcious ſenſe of deſerved ſuperiority, ſo becoming a woman

* Manuſcript, memoirs of the biſhop of Agen.

who

who ſtood next to the firſt throne in the world.

Overwhelmed with melancholy, ſhe languiſhed in a ſwift decay, and prepared herſelf for death, when a courier came to tell madame de Maintenon who was at Saint-Cyr, that the dauphineſs whom ſhe had left tolerably well in the morning deſired to ſee her, that ſhe might have ſome private diſcourſe with her, and die in her arms. Madame de Maintenon ſet out inſtantly from Saint-Cyr; ſhe was ſhut up two hours with the princeſs: what paſſed between them was never known, probably the dauphineſs expreſſed her regret for not having always loved her; and cleared herſelf of ſome imputations which had been the cauſe of her own unhappineſs in loſing the king's eſteem for her. This ſecret converſation, this inſtance of confidence in thoſe moments, when all diſſimulation is at an end, is the higheſt eulogium that can be given to madame de Maintenon: her elevation raiſed her enemies, and ſhe might be hated for a time, but ſuch was the involuntary eſteem her acknowledged virtue inſpired, that this hatred ended in the tendereſt affection for her.

The dauphineſs expired, embracing the little duke of Berry, to whom ſhe ſaid, 'moſt

'moſt tenderly do I love thee, tho' thou 'has coſt me dear.' The king forcing the dauphin from the bed-ſide, ſaid to him, 'ſuch is the end of human greatneſs.'

The dauphineſs was not lamented ſo much as decency required, neither by the court, her houſhold, her huſband, madame de Maintenon, the king, the poor, nor the devotees; however ſhe was kind and good in her domeſtick life, ſhe loved the dauphin, ſhe was charitable, ſhe eſteemed madame de Maintenon, and ſhe was pious, but ſhe had not a French heart; ſhe had not French manners, and all her good qualities were overlooked.

The king, to diſſipate what was called his grief, made a great hunting-match; this diverſion did not employ, tho' it unbent his mind, which is a little extraordinary in a ſtation where it is ſo natural to be oppreſſed with languor, and to ſeek to ſhun one's ſelf.

When he returned to Verſailles, all the great officers and ladies of the deceaſed dauphineſs's houſhold came to kiſs his hand; madame de Maintenon who as dame d'Autour ſhould have performed this ceremony, inſtead of making compliments of condolence received them. She was the only perſon of that princeſs's houſhold

hold who did not appear at the ſolemn funeral ſervice performed at Saint-Denis and at *Notre-Dame*, and her abſence on this occaſion inſtructed the curious in all they wiſhed to be certain of.

Ever after, ſhe ſeemed to conſider herſelf only as a private perſon when out of the caſtle of Verſailles, within it ſhe had the higheſt honours, notwithſtanding her extreme ſolicitude to avoid them. She would not uſe the mourning hangings of the court; 'I am not a dutcheſs,' ſaid ſhe. The firſt marſhal de Noailles repreſenting to her that ſhe had a right to it as having been once dame d'Autour, ſhe ſhewed ſome ſurpriſe in her countenance at his founding that right upon her having been a domeſtick of the dauphineſs, and anſwered only by a ſmile, which ſeemed to ſay, that the dignity of her ſtation placed her above that ſubordinate grandeur, while her humility rejected all.

CHAPTER VII.

The campaign of Mons.

THE league of Augſbourg had armed all Europe againſt Lewis XIV. The prince of Orange repaſſed the Sea, and the confederate princes of Germany compoſed

poſed his court in Holland, whither he now came to conſole himſelf for the averſion of a people who hated him, as ſoon as they had crowned him.

The ſucceſs of his enterpriſe had not made him happy, and the only gratification of that ambition to which he had ſacrificed every thing, was the momentary joy of a man who goes to bed with a revenue of five hundred thouſand livres and riſes a king.* He fled from the caprice, and perhaps the troubleſome remorſe of his wife, the moſt lovely and the moſt miſerable princeſs in the world. The dauphin to whom ſhe had been propoſed had no reaſon to envy him.

Our arms had been ſucceſsful, his had been deciſive. The battle of the Boyne had decided the conteſt between James II. and him: it is true this battle had coſt him marſhal Schomberg, but Lewis had juſt loſt a miniſter who only was capable of re-eſtabliſhing the affairs of Ireland. Seignelay died, and with him died our ma-

* The marquis de Dangeau relates in his journal, that the prince of Orange, when he was leaving Holland, ſaid theſe words to the ſtates: 'Gentlemen, farewel 'forever, I go, reſolved to periſh or to reign. If I 'periſh; I ſhall die your ſervant; If I reign, I ſhall live 'your friend.' This circumſtance is neither true nor probable.

rine: he was ſucceeded by Pontchartrain, whoſe peculiar deſtiny was to ſucceed every one without repairing the loſs of any.

The king reſolved to head his army, and once more ſpread in perſon that terror, of his arms which had begun to loſe its force. Madame de Maintenon was too jealous of his glory to oppoſe this deſign: a lawful paſſion never enervates the mind.

Lewis aſſembled his council, and without any other preliminary declared that he would make the campaign of Flanders. 'That I may triumph, ſaid he, over 'thoſe enemies who envy my glory, and 'maintain the purity of that religion, 'which by the extirpation of hereſy I 'have eſtabliſhed throughout my dominions, it is my intention notwithſtanding the rigour of the ſeaſon to go and 'lay ſiege to Mons, the principal bulwark of the league, and take it before 'the eyes of this pretended diſtributer of 'provinces.'

This reſolution aſtoniſhed the miniſters, and made the whole kingdom tremble; ſuch real terrors did this William inſpire, whoſe ſuppoſed death had the year before been celebrated by rejoicings

rejoicings, which Lewis alone disapproved.

Madame de Maintenon did not attend the king to Flanders, yet was not disturbed with any apprehensions of losing her influence. Some days before the king's departure, she retired to Saint-Cyr. Lewis came there to take leave of her, and they were two hours alone together. After imploring peace of God at the feet of the altars, he desired to see the community assembled: 'Adieu ladies, said he to 'them. I recommend myself to your 'prayers, I have great need of them: 'to be a king is to fill a post, which ex-'poses us to many sins.' Tears were in his eyes as he spoke these words, which made the whole community weep. 'I 'hope, added he, that God will hear the 'prayers you offer for me:' after having said a few words to madame de Maintenon, he again addressed the community, and shewing her to them: 'Adieu! 'ladies, said he, to your care I leave 'what I most value in the world.'

Madame de Loubert the superiour replied, that the whole community would redouble their prayers that God would be pleased to make him victorious. 'Pray 'rather for peace than for victory, said 'the king, we must endeavour to make

'our enemies demand this wiſhed for 'peace of us.' *

During his abſence Saint-Cyr was almoſt inceſſantly employed in imploring of heaven the preſervation of the king and the bleſſings of peace. Madame de Maintenon received every day an account of the progreſs of the ſiege from Couriers diſpatched by the king for that purpoſe: ſhe communicated theſe advices to the king of England who often ſpent whole days with her at Saint-Cyr, and there endeavoured to conſole himſelf for the bad ſucceſs of the brave Odonel in Ireland. It was matter of wonder to the publick to ſee a dethroned prince ſhutting himſelf up in convents, while Lewis was braving all the rigors of the ſeaſon, and all the dangers of war to reſtore him his crown.

The ſiege of Mons was conducted with great ſkill: Boufflers inveſted the place, the king attacked it in perſon, Luxembourg and Feuillade commanded under him, and all the princes were preſent at the action: Vauban had the direction of the works. The prince of Orange gave the beſiegers ſome uneaſineſs by drawing

* It will be eaſily imagined that theſe words were committed to paper upon the ſpot. I have them as well as many other particulars from a lady who was educated at Saint-Cyr.

near

near Notre-Dame de Hall, and the French guards having attacked a horn-work were ſeized with a panick and fled: their officers endeavoured to ſtop them by preſenting their drawn ſwords to their breaſts, but all was ineffectual. The grenadiers and muſqueteers attacked this work, and carried it in three quarters of an hour, then it was that the guards had the name of *Pierrots* given them, which it is ſaid they have not yet deſerved to loſe.

The king dined with a good appetite within ſight of the lines: he walked round the town, and continued a long time within muſket-ſhot. A centinel having ſtopped him, ſome body aſked him if he did not know the king: 'yes, 'replied the centinel, I know the king, 'but this is not his place.'

A moment afterwards, the horſe of de la Chenaye, was killed by a cannon-ball very near the king and at the ſide of the count de Toulouſe, who giving orders that la Chenaye ſhould be remounted, ſaid, 'and 'is a cannon ball nothing more than 'this?'

One of the enemies officers who had been taken in a ſally made by the beſieged, being interrogated by the king, aſſured

him that the place could not be taken without a battle, the king replied. ‘ So ‘ much the better, it is for that purpoſe, ‘ that we are here.’

Notwithſtanding the various employments given him by this ſiege, he held his councils with great exactneſs, and at once fought his enemies, and directed the affairs of his provinces: he viſited the hoſpital of the army twice, was preſent while the wounded were dreſt, and comforted the dying: the ſurgeons never performed their duty better.

Mons ſurrendered after the trenches had been opened before it fifteen days. The prince of Bergue had defended it valiantly, and Lewis was in every one of the attacks: madame de Maintenon went with the princeſſes to meet him at Compiegne, and after the firſt compliments, ſaid to him, ‘ Sire, we intreat you, as ‘ David's generals did him, to go out no ‘ more with us to war, leſt the light of ‘ Iſrael ſhould be extinguiſhed.’

The king went to Saint-Cyr to return thanks to God for the victory he had given him, and for the life which his providence had preſerved: madame de Maintenon obligingly reproached him with having given terrors to the whole world,

by expoſing himſelf too much: the king replied: 'I have only done my duty.' But ſaid madame de Loubert, 'the happineſs of the ſtate depends upon the ſafety of your ſacred perſon.' Places like mine, reſumed the king, can never be void, another will fill it better than I have done, I probably have abilities for war, becauſe I am experienced in it, another prince may excel me in better things.'

CHAPTER VIII.

The Academy. The marſhal de la Feuillade.

THESE ſentiments were not diſſembled, Lewis had all the ſimplicity and candour of great minds. He began to reflect with ſhame upon that haughtineſs and oſtentation of grandeur, which had diſtinguiſhed the firſt years of his reign, and raiſed him ſo many enemies. He refuſed the harangues of the ſovereign courts upon the campaign of Mons. The academy, which was then as ready to applaud humility as it had been before to nouriſh pride, gave the king's modeſty for a ſubject. Madame de Maintenon had no eſteem for this

literary ſociety, whoſe compliments, flatteries, and even its works ſeemed calculated to to keep up mean envy, to cramp the language, and to propagate bad taſte, 'Are you not aſhamed, ſaid ſhe, to Fe-'nelon one day, to be among men who 'argue only upon words?'

Madame de Maintenon, notwithſtanding her averſion to this body, always protected it in ſome of its members, yet ſhe never pretended to any power in the elections: it fell into a lethargy which would have held it yet, if La-Motte, the three times rejected Fontenelle, and ſome other illuſtrious wits had not reanimated it. The intrigues of the court, into which it was introduced by the cabals of ſome men of letters, preſerved it from languiſhing. The votes were never more free nor leſs juſt than in the firſt years of Lewis XIV. If places in the academy were to be had by intereſt, they would be always well filled, provided they were ſought with emulation, which they will always be, while a ſuperiour genius poſſeſſes one. Wiſe men ſtill look upon this ſociety as a ſet of triflers and paraſites, while wiſer than they conſider it as an aſſembly of extraordinary men: hence proceeds that eager ſolicitude among the members of the academy of things to be received into the academy of words, and hence the diffe-

two

rence between the emulation which theſe two ſocieties inſpire, as between the ſouls of Bignon and Richelieu their legiſlators.

Thoſe who pretended to know the king well, thought this contempt for praiſe inſincere: they even inſinuated that he loved praiſe ſo inordinately, that he envied any ſhare of it to another. Tourreil, who had been elected by the French academy, introduced into his diſcourſe, in praiſe of the king, a compliment to Ponchartrain whoſe clerk he was. The miniſter commanded him to ſuppreſs this compliment: the academician, who did not think this humility ſincere, made a very flattering eulogium on him. When he returned to the hôtel de Pontchartrain, expecting to receive the thanks of the miniſter, the Swiſs refuſed him entrance. Pontchartrain ſhewed great attention to diſcover the authors of thoſe epigrams, which were wrote againſt him: there were ſome equally cruel wrote upon the king, why did he not puniſh the authors of them likewiſe?

Lewis was ſo ſincerely diſguſted with adulation, that madame de Maintenon often ſaid. 'He is thought to be vain 'and haughty, yet there is no one that 'has leſs of thoſe faults than him.' Who better knew his virtues than her who had

given them to him. He uſed to acknowledge with the candor of a man ſuperiour to his errors, ſuch as he had committed through the immenſe variety of the affairs in which he was employed, and the indiſpenſible duties of his ſtation. He deſpiſed the theſes of the Minimes at Marſeille, as ſoon as he knew the ſignification of thoſe words conſecrated by the Holy-Ghoſt to the king of heaven and earth, *dico ego opera mea regi.*

He was extremely offended at the impious inſcription made by Meneſtrier the jeſuit, and engraved upon the frize and upon the four faces of the temple of honour dedicated to him by the city of Paris. * He deſired the ſtates of Languedoc to apply thoſe ſums to the relief of the province which they had deſtined for an equeſtrian ſtatue of him. To thoſe who merit ſtatues it is eaſy to refuſe them, yet it is glorious alſo. He did

* *Regi Ludovico magno P. P. votis publicis*
Devota numini majeſtatique ejus
Civitas Pariſienſis pia, fidelis, obſequens
Memoris obſervantiæ templum D. D. C.

'The City of Paris, pious, faithful, obedient, devoted by publick vows to the divinity and majeſty of king Lewis the great, the father of the country, hath conſecrated this temple as a monument of its veneration and gratitude.

not

not ſhew much ſatisfaction at that which was erected to him in *la place des victories*, the inſcription of which *viro immortali*, was criticiſed by foreigners as being idolatrous although it was only energetick: *Viro* and no more would have ſeemed to ſay leſs, and would have ſaid more.

The marſhal de la Feuillade ſaw his favour decreaſing, in proportion as the king's love for true glory augmented. In the agreeable part of converſation Feuillade excelled all men: he firſt was informed of every thing that was new, fruitful in amuſements of every kind, imitating at a vaſt expence the pomp of the great lords whom he had ſeen. He was a model for courtiers, as Lewis was for heroes, but when Lewis became wiſe, or had a tendency to become ſo, Feuillade knew not how to conform to this change, and therefore ceaſed to pleaſe him. The king was devout, and Feuillade made a jeſt of devotion, he loved play, yet deſpiſed *reſſource* which the king had invented, and brought from Saint-Cyr to Marly. He would not play at *Portiques*, although the king was extremely fond of it, becauſe there was no other art than to croſs or pile: Lewis did not like witticiſms and repartees; and Feuillade would always be witty. He became odious to the miniſters, dreaded by his friends,

and perceived that the favour of the prince is ſoon loſt, when a man is hated by every one elſe. He died ſuddenly, and had only time to utter theſe word, 'My God, 'have mercy upon me, why have I not 'done for thee the thouſandth part of 'what I have done for the king.'

Feuillade was interred at Saint-Euſtache, where he had not even a tomb: when Lewis was informed of his death, the courtiers thought they perceived ſome ſigns of joy on his countenance, and the boldeſt of them trembled.

CHAPTER IX.

The death of the Marquis de Louvois.

THE fall of Louvois was owing to the ſame cauſe as the diſgrace of Feuillade. The king now hated that falſe glory in purſuit of which he had gained ſo many victories, committed ſo many errors, and ſuffered ſuch various misfortunes. All the ſchemes of a miniſter end in maintaining himſelf in a poſt which he fills only by commiſſion, and which the publick always ſuppoſes will

will be better filled by any other. Louvois who found himſelf almoſt uſeleſs in peace, had kindled this war, for which the king reproached him ſo much the more, as he was ſenſible he had taken too great advantage of his inclination for it.

No one of the other miniſters had dared to oppoſe him, he had ſubjected them all by the force of his genius, and by the unexpected ſucceſs of his boldeſt enterpriſes. Seignelay had been reduced to employ the mediation of women, in affairs that related to the good of the ſtate. Croiſſy underſtood nothing but the arts of negotiation, and yet had not that ſpirit of foreſight and caution which conducts every thing with deliberation. Pomponne whoſe mind was filled with his former diſgrace, was continually employed in preventing a ſecond. Chateauneuf was obliged to content himſelf with the laborious office of a clerk. Pontchartrain filled his poſt of ſuperintendant of the finances, as if he had been affraid that he ſhould loſe it, and conducted the afairs of the marine, as if he deſpaired of retrieving them. Boucherat was wholly employed in the chicanry of the law. Roſe and the preſident la Chaiſe were not capable of taking advantage of circumſtances to inforce the reſolutions of the cabinet. Pelletier deplored the misfortunes of his country. Beauvil-

Beauvilliers had only virtues. Louvois had engroſſed all the power to himſelf, and France had but one miniſter, although ſhe had not a prime miniſter.

The king wiſhed but could not reſolve to ſhake off the yoke: Louvois treated him with a haughtineſs, which kings may ſometimes diſſemble, but never pardon. He was now hated by Lewis, yet he did not ceaſe to be uſeful to him, and ſuch was his influence that at the eve of a diſgrace, a long time projected, and always deferred, he obtained the ſuperintendence of the poſt-offices, a place of immenſe profit.

The coldneſs of the king towards him, the reſerved behaviour of madame de Maintenon, the publick hatred, ſome verſes in Eſther applied to him, all warned him, (if ſuch warning can ever be heard) that it was time for him to forſake the court.

After the ſiege of Mons he ſuffered ſo many mortifications, that he ſaw plainly, his ruin was reſolved upon. He was accuſed of having neglected the advices ſent him by Monſieur d'Avaux, who had diſcovered the deſign of the prince of Orange to invade England, which might have been ſo eaſily prevented. They reproached him with the cruelties exerciſed

in

in the Palatinate, the bombardment of Liege upon a very ſlight pretence, the loſs of Mayence which had been but ill provided for a ſiege. He was accuſed of having ſent private orders to Bulonde to raiſe the ſiege of Coni; of having protracted that of Mons, and of giving the prince of Orange time to attempt throwing in ſuccours to the beſieged. He was blamed for the loſs of the battle of Valcourt, in which marſhal d'Humieres commanded, and for not having uſed proper endeavours to retain the king of Sweden in the intereſt of France, which he had forſaken and joined the league of Auſbergh.

All his ſervices were forgot, his errors only were remembered, and the errors of others were alſo attributed to him: ſo eaſy it is to make the greateſt miniſter for military affairs, appear weak and criminal. But all theſe accuſations were trifles compared with the guilt he incurred by the purport of two papers with writing on the margin in his own hand. They were given to madame de Maintenon by d'Augicour a gentleman in the ſervice of Louvois, who betrayed his maſter. Madame de Maintenon's regard for Lewis would not permit her to ſuppreſs theſe papers. One of them contained a ſcheme for treating the duke of Savoy

Savoy ſo ill, as to oblige him at length to declare againſt France. The other was to force the Swiſs to break their alliance with us, by failing in every article of the capitulations made with them.

This fact would be ſcarce credible if we did not know to what extremities a miniſter will proceed, whoſe power and influence are declining, who is always ready to preſerve by crimes and treachery a ſtation, where his virtues or his abilities have placed him, but in which his ſervices are not able to maintain him. This diſcovery threw Lewis into the utmoſt aſtoniſhment: he found he had a miniſter, whoſe whole attention was employed in raiſing him enemies, and who ſported with the fortunes and the lives of his ſubjects: what more could a traitor have done?

He would have had him inſtantly arreſted, but he had ſtill occaſion for his councils, and he was likewiſe ſure that the victim could not eſcape him, he therefore continued to do buſineſs with Louvois, but was not able to ſuppreſs his reſentment, though he concealed the motives of it. It has been ſaid by ſome perſons of the court, who lived in theſe times, that one day the king ſpeaking to him with great harſhneſs, the miniſter threw

threw ſome papers on the table, near the king, ſaying, 'There is no ſerving you.' The king roſe, and ſnatching up the tongs, would have ſtruck his inſolent miniſter, if he had not been withheld by madame de Maintenon, whoſe preſence Louvois did not think would have been ſo uſeful to him, after having been ſo diſagreeable.

This ſudden tranſport of rage deſtroyed in one inſtant the health of Louvois, the fruits of thirty years ſervice and of twelve years of favour: hope alone remained, he knew that the king had an averſion for violent meaſures, and after having lived twenty five years with him, he knew him ſo little as to be apprehenſive only of poiſon. He diſſembled his grief, but it was too violent to ſuffer him to be always maſter of it. The courtiers perceived it, and the fierce and haughty Louvois was now become an object of compaſſion. A flatterer, ſtill exaggerating his power to him, he replied: *One day in favour, the next in the Baſtile.*

Incapable of ſubmiſſion, he offended his maſter again, and one day oppoſed him ſo rudely, that the king quitting his deſk, went forwards to the chimney, and took up his cane: Louvois went out of his preſence with ſerenity in his countenance

nance but deſpair in his heart. As ſoon as he arrived at his own houſe he cried out, *I am ruined*, And diſcharged his rage upon ſome unhappy perſons, to whom he ſent letters de Cachet, while he dreaded his own.

'It is done, ſaid he to a friend, my 'cataſtrophe is approaching, my ruin is 'decreed, and all that now remains, is to 'determine the manner of it. His friend told him that his fears were ill grounded, that during twenty years he had heard him ſay the ſame thing, but that his experienee of the paſt, ſhould make him leſs apprehenſive of the future. 'That is 'true, replied Louvois, but formerly, if 'the king was diſpleaſed with me, it 'ſeemed to be the fault of his humour 'only, and he would immediately after-'wards aſſume an obliging air, but now 'he treats me with the utmoſt contempt, 'and every day brings with it a new and 'more cruel affront. I know him, I 'have obſerved him; he takes pleaſure in 'uſing me ill, and he has uſed me too ill, 'to make it poſſible for me to forgive him.'

July 16. 1692. Tortured with his own reflections, fluctuating between the deſire of finiſhing his career nobly, and his fears of making a baſe retreat, divided between the love of glory and the love of liberty, he reſolved to reſign

ſign all his employmeuts. Madame de Maintenon wrote to him, that he might return to council, and do buſineſs as uſual, adviſed him to ſhew no reſentment, and aſſured him that the ſtorm was over.

This letter reſtored him to life, he forgot his reſolution which alone could have ſaved him: he ſaw the king again, and ſaw that he had irrecoverably loſt his favour. When the council broke up, he went home, retired to his own apartment, and drank a glaſs of water: exhauſted with grief, terror and anxiety, he threw himſelf into a great chair, uttered ſome inarticulate words, and expired.

The ſuddenneſs of his death perſuaded the public that it could not be natural, as if an oppreſſion of the heart, occaſioned by diſappointment and chagrin, was not the natural death of an ambitious man. The king when he heard of it, expreſſed great ſatisfaction. 'This year, ſaid he, 'has delivered me from three men whom 'it was no longer poſſible to bear with, 'Seignelay, la Feuillade and Louvois.'

The publick was more confirmed in their notions of his being poiſoned: it is neceſſary that princes, however averſe they are to this crime, ſhould remember that

that they are ſurrounded by perſons who are always inclined to ſuſpect them of it. The king gave Louvois employments to Barbezieux, whom that miniſter had hated, and endeavoured in vain to form him for the buſineſs of the ſtate.

Lewis did not immediately feel that he had loſt a great miniſter, becauſe till the peace of Reſwick, the plan laid down by Louvois had been exactly followed: but Louvois had not concerted one for the war on account of the ſucceſſion to the throne of Spain, and then it was firſt perceived that he was no more.

In none of thoſe miniſters which Lewis afterwards tried in military affairs, did he find that attention to the moſt trifling circumſtances notwithſtanding the greatneſs of his deſigns, that ready diſpatch in the midſt of innumerable affairs, that firmneſs in maintaining military dicipline, that profound ſecrecy, which had given the ſuſpicious William ſo many uneaſy nights, thoſe wiſe inſtructions ſo uſeful to generals, and which conſtrained none but Turenne, that knowledge of men which always directed him to the beſt choice, and when to employ them ſeaſonably: in a word, in none of them could he find that ſon of Machiavel, that compound of a courtier, and a citizen, born, as it ſhould

ſhould ſeem for the oppreſſion and the glory of his country.

Louvois left immenſe riches to his family: no miniſter had ever been more nobly rewarded, he had purchaſed all the land about his own eſtate without laying any perſon under the leaſt reſtraint, a very remarkable circumſtance in a man of his rank and character.

CHAPTER X.

The marriages of the duke de Chartres, *and of the duke du* Maine.

THE affairs of the ſtate did not hinder Lewis from attending to thoſe of his family. To ſecure to the duke du Maine and the count de Toulouſe the rank for which he deſigned them, he reſolved to give mademoiſelle de Blois their ſiſter to the duke de Chartres his nephew. This deſign was a remainder of that pride with which he had been intoxicated. To what foreign prince could he have propoſed ſuch an alliance? yet he determined to propoſe it to the only ſon of his brother. To Lewis every thing appeared mean that was not diſtinguiſhingly great. And in his opinion he neither degraded the duke de Chartres, nor honoured

noured mademoiſelle de Blois by this match. In his eyes, the firſt prince of his blood was only the firſt of his ſubjects as long as he permitted him to be ſo, and he thought the fruits of a guilty paſſion might pleaſe perſons the moſt delicate in points of honour, if thoſe fruits were his.

Lewis deſpiſed the national prejudices, the adulation of his courtiers had taught him to think, that he who was the maſter of the peoples actions, ought to be ſo of their judgment, and every prince who is not born to reign over the hearts of his ſubjects expects at leaſt to reign over their wills. He ſaw that the duke de Vendôme had neither in his court nor in his parliament, any diſtinction or authority that ſhewed him to be the grandſon of a king, and he ſecretly blamed Henry the fourth for not having dared to deſpiſe that hated diſtinction between pure and mixed blood.

But ſince it was probable his family might have attentions to the glory of the Bourbons, which the chief of the Bourbons had not, he thought it neceſſary to obtain from love that conſent which authority could not force till it had ſuffered a refuſal. It was with this deſign that mademoiſelle de Blois was often expoſed to the eyes of the prince.

This

This young lady had all the beauty of her mother, but there was a gentleneſs in her countenance that promiſed a diſpoſition very different. The duke de Chartres was of that age, when whatever is loved, is loved with ardor. He ſoon conceived a violent paſſion for mademoiſelle de Blois; he never ſaw her without wiſhing that ſhe was not illegitimate, and perhaps without forgetting that ſhe was ſo.

The ſentiments he entertained he doubtleſs inſpired. No man was ever more amiable, no woman ever had a form more capable of pleaſing, a more beautiful complexion, or more regular features, and no man ever cultivated the graces of his perſon leſs. The prince had inſpired the moſt inſenſible of the ſex with love, yet he always attempted the eaſieſt conqueſts. His firſt amours alarmed the king, who directed madame de Maintenon to ſhew him the indecency and madneſs of ſuch a paſſion: this reprimand was given with ſo much gentleneſs and wiſdom that the prince from that moment had the tendereſt regard for madame de Maintenon, and returned to his ſtudies which he had quitted for love.

Theſe little irregularities gave the king an opportunity to pretend that he would look

look out for a wife for him, ſince he found he muſt have one, and afterwards to offer him his daughter, which the example of two other branches ſecured from a refuſal.

The dutcheſs of Orleans, * who to the pride of blood and the extreme delicaſy of her nation with regard to marriages, joined all the haughtineſs of the ſiſter-in-law of the greateſt monarch in the world, and a declared contempt for madame de de Monteſpan, who during her favour had not ſhewed any ſolicitude to gain her friendſhip, heard the firſt propoſals with great diſdain. The duke of Orleans, who had no will but hers, ſometimes gave the king hopes that the match ſhould be concluded, ſometimes promiſed the dutcheſs that he would reſolutely oppoſe it, and ſometimes ſeemed, with madame de Maintenon, to be inclined to yield; he was in the irreſolute ſtate of mind of a courtier who is ſenſible that what is required of him is mean, but remembers that his maſter has many offences to pardon him.

* Charlotte-Iſabella, daughter of Charles-Lewis, elector palatine, married at Châlons, November 21, 1671. and died 1722.

The

The duke de Chartres was tranſported at the thoughts of being ſon to the king and poſſeſſor of her he loved: but his mother telling him that by this match he would diſhonour her, his anceſtors, himſelf, and his poſterity, he ceaſed to love or feigned to do ſo. However an underſtanding ſuperiour already to prejudices of every kind, raiſed him above thoſe trifling conſiderations of illegitimacy; but that he might uſe them to his own advantage he ſeemed to be influenced by thoſe conſiderations, with a view of reſtoring the dignity of grandſon of France, if the marriage was concluded, and of acquiring by an honourable reſiſtance, the favour of the people if it ſhould not.

The king and madame de Maintenon were extremely ſolicitous for the ſucceſs of this affair, the king, becauſe he had a great affection for mademoiſelle de Blois, and madame de Maintenon, becauſe ſhe adored the duke du Maine, whoſe rank which his father's tenderneſs and liberality had made ſo illuſtrious would be rendered ſecure by this alliance. Both the king and her, diſſembled their concern at the bad ſucceſs of their firſt endeavours in favour of this marriage, and at ſome ſevere expreſſions which had eſcaped the dutcheſs of Orleans, whoſe politeneſs was not one of her moſt diſtinguiſhing qua-

lities. The abbé Dubois was employed by the king, and madame de Maintenon, to negociate this affair, he was ſub-preceptor to the prince, and was raiſed to this poſt with more difficulty than afterwards to that of firſt miniſter.

This abbé had already that aſcendant over the mind of the prince, which a man, devoted to pleaſures, muſt neceſſarily obtain over a youth who is beginning to love them; he had acquired the confidance of his pupil, by laughing with him at all thoſe who reproved him for his faults. Madame de Maintenon could not eaſily reſolve to truſt the king's deſigns to a man of low birth, who had no religion, was the corrupter of his pupil, and ſo openly, that the duke of Orleans had forbid him to attend his ſon in his firſt campaign in Flanders. But as ſoon as ſhe converſed with him, ſhe found him ſo ready to comply with all that ſhe propoſed, ſo grave, ſo ſincerely attached to the ſtate, and ſo fruitful in expedients, that her averſion for him ceaſed; ſhe apprehended no treachery from him, and ſhe told the king that ſhe would anſwer for the ſucceſs of this affair.

The abbé ſubdued by degrees the duke de Chartres reluctance to this match, and

and adviſed him to conclude it, notwithſtanding the oppoſition made by his parents. He repreſented to him, that his obſtinacy would offend the king, who when he found he could not be his father-in-law, would become his perſecutor: that he would remove him from affairs, exclude him from the diverſions of the court, and deprive him of the command of the army: that when the duke of Orleans died, he would reduce him to the quality of firſt prince of the blood, and to thoſe honours only which were inſeperable from that rank; and during his life would always prevent his marrying.

The duke of Chartres yielded to the force of theſe arguments, he ſaw that by this marriage he ſhould ſecure all his prerogatives, and this conſideration determined him. In his heart he contemned thoſe prejudices which had ſuch weight with his parents, but it was with difficulty that he could bring himſelf to avow this contempt publickly. His ambition raiſed him above popular opinion, and in an affair which was to decide the happineſs of his life, he thought and acted like a prince and a philoſopher.

The abbé Dubois adviſed him to treat privately with the king, and ſuggeſted to him what conditions he ſhould exact.

The,

The duke punctually followed his inſtructions, and the king extremely pleaſed at the ready compliance of his nephew, promiſed him the entire ſucceſſion to all the rights of the duke of Orleans, his father. And theſe promiſes were faithfully performed.

When the dutcheſs of Orleans was informed of the ſtep her ſon had taken, ſhe threatned him ſeverely, and forbid him to go any farther; others add, that ſhe ſtruck him, reproaching him at the ſame time with the infamy he drew upon himſelf, as if the chief of a family was not the beſt judge, of what either honoured or diſgraced it.

The duke of Orleans who ſeemed diſſatisfied through policy was appeaſed by reaſon. The marriage was celebrated with great magnificence at Verſailles. The dutcheſs of Orleans appeared at all the entertainments that were made on this occaſion with ſeeming ſatisfaction; in this illegitimated princeſs the duke de Chartres found what he vainly ſought in the greater part of princeſſes born in marriage, great wiſdom, unaffected modeſty, ſolid piety, conjugal fidelity, economy, the talents and the patience neceſſary for the education of her children, and a thouſand

Feb. 19. 1692.

thouſand qualities which the corruption of the age has exalted into eminent virtues.

Dubois was rewarded with a little abbey, and was tranſported with joy at his good fortune, he afterwards received a cardinals hat with ſcorn; however he did not obtain that ſmall benefice without difficulty; father de la Chaiſe who did not know the king's reaſons for giving it him, repreſented to his majeſty that Dubois was addicted to women, wine and play. 'That may be, anſwered the 'king, but he has no engagement, he is 'never drunk, and he never loſes.'

The duke du Maine was almoſt as happy as the duke de Chartres, and without any degradation. The king was tired of foreign princeſſes, he therefore married him to mademoiſelle de Charolois grand-daughter to the great Condé. Whom at Sçeaux we have ſeen patronizing the ſciences and the arts, deſpiſed almoſt every where elſe, preſerving till the laſt moment a taſte for genius, and the reſpect and eſteem of the publick, ſo much the more honourable to her as being paid to her merit and not to her favour at court. Madame de Maintenon had aſſiſted in her education, and often ſaid, when ſhe ſaw her launch into the pleaſures of the *March* 19.

age, with all the eager ſolicitude of youth. 'Muſt this alſo eſcape me.'

The duke du Maine, had then deſigns of ambition and ſparks of genius, he had paſſed through all the military degrees, and ſerved in Flanders with diſtinction. The publick ſaid, he concealed a thouſand ſtriking qualities, under an air of modeſty and indolence; the publick was miſtaken, madame de Maintenon, knew him better. 'He is too virtuous, ſaid ſhe, 'ever to make much noiſe.'

The marchioneſs de Monteſpan, intereſted herſelf but very little, in theſe events, 'ſhall I go to court, cried ſhe, to act 'the fine part of the mother of the prin-'ces or the Dowager miſtreſs.' However ſhe did appear there, and was received as if ſhe had never been there before. She gave a bed worth forty thouſand crowns, to the duke du Maine, her perils to the dutcheſs of Bourbon, and her diamonds, to the dutcheſs of Chartres. It was expected that the interview between her and madame de Maintenon, would have been extremely embaraſſing to both, but they behaved at firſt, as if they had never known each other, and afterwards, as if they had always been friends.

Mon-

Monſieur de * * * * flattered himſelf that he ſhould have been able to reconcile her with her huſband, who had like her turned devotee. Madame de Monteſpan readily conſented, but the huſband was inflexible, and monſieur de * * * deſiſted from this ſcheme in which there was more piety, than good ſenſe or honour. The marquis de Monteſpan occaſioned a good jeſt, by leaving legacies to the duke du Maine, and the count de Toulouſe, as to his lawful children. According to the axiom of law ſo often inſiſted upon.

CHAPTER XI.

The ſiege of Namur.

THE new married princes ſoon quitted love for war and glory. Lewis being informed of the meaſures taken by the allies, judged it neceſſary to force them by ſome ſtriking enterpriſe either to make peace, or to hazard the loſs of three kingdoms, which their chief had conquered. In the low countries, the allies had a hundred thouſand men, but Lewis was perſuaded, that his army, ſupported, and animated by his preſence, would eaſily ſtop their progreſs. 1692.

While William waited for the ſeaſon for opening the campaign, he affected to lead a life of great eaſe and indifference at Loo, a ſolitary country houſe conformable to his melancholly temper, and very convenient for carrying on his private correſpondence. He uſed to hunt every day, and appeared to be as little moved with the great preparations France was making againſt him, as if he had the diſpoſal of all events. By this ſeeming ſecurity he animated his allies with new hopes, deceived the elector of Bavaria, and defied Lewis.

The king of France reſolving to open the campaign with ſome important conqueſt, laid ſiege to Namur, which had at all times been conſidered as the ſtrongeſt bulwark of the united provinces, and for that very reaſon the moſt likely to raiſe the reputation of his arms.

Madame de Maintenon expreſt an inclination to be with the king during this ſiege. The king readily conſented to it. 'You will attend me, ſaid he, if I ſhould 'be ſiezed with any illneſs, as for all 'other accidents, I am reſigned to the 'will of providence, which, if my life 'be neceſſary to France, will I doubt not 'preſerve it, and if it be uſeleſs, I am 'contented to loſe it.'

He

He had often ran to meet death with the noble ardour of a hero, the chriſtian reſigned to the decrees of God, did not even deign to brave it. Madame de Maintenon was charmed with theſe pious ſentiments, ſhe ſaw with conſcious ſatisfaction the progreſs of her work, and her tenderneſs was increaſed by it. Whatever ſhe eſteemed, ſhe loved; Lewis therefore was the moſt amiable of men, becauſe he was the moſt worthy.

In the beginning of May, the court departed from Verſailles. The princeſs of Conti, the dutcheſs of Bourbon, and the princeſs of Harcourt were in the king's coach. Madame de Grammont, the dutcheſs de Chevreuſe, and the counteſs de Mailly were in the coach of the dutcheſs of Orleans. Madame de Maintenon was in the king's hunting calaſh with mademoiſelle de Caſtéja, whoſe place had been eagerly coveted by the moſt diſtinguiſhed ladies of the court, and even by the princeſſes. This calaſh was filled with ſacks of money, and bread, which ſhe diſtributed among the poor as ſhe paſſed. She obſerved to the king the exceſſive poverty, which appeared every where; perſuaded, that to remedy it, it was only neceſſary that he ſhould know it.

The French had taken towns; they had gained the battles of Fleurus, of Staffarde and Leuze. A numerous army was going to a certain conqueſt, but in the midſt of all this proſperity, agriculture languiſhed: each victory ſeemed to contribute to the general poverty, and helped to dry up the ſources of plenty. They had already raiſed three hundred millions for extraordinary affairs.

Lewis did not inſult the diſtreſſes of his ſubjects by an ill-timed magnificence. He travelled with the utmoſt ſimplicity; the coaches ſtopped in the middle of a field, and the proviſions which had been dreſſed before, were ſerved on a board laid upon the windows of the four equipages, and formed a table where they took a ſhort repaſt. It was madame de Maintenon who introduced this frugality, ſo well calculated, to baniſh the enervating ſoftneſs of luxury from an army in the room of that aſiatick pomp with which Lewis had been ſo often reproached, although it was not ſo much in compliance with his own taſte, as to pleaſe madame de Monteſpan who expected wherever ſhe went to find the ſplendor of Verſailles, and the luxury of Clagny.

The king reviewed his own army and that commanded by the duke de Luxembourg, before the ladies, and ſhewed them a hundred and twenty thouſand men ranged in four lines.

He left the ladies at Dinant and began his march two days afterwards. Condé, Boufflers and Ximénes inveſted Namur. Luxembourg's army kept the field to obſerve the motions of the enemy who advanced towards Mehaigne, but durſt not attack it. Namur was taken before their eyes, although defended with a garriſon of nine thouſand men.

The town only was attacked at firſt: ſeveral ladies of that province ſuppoſing the French would not venture to form the ſiege, had taken refuge there, and now ſent to deſire permiſſion to leave it. Marſhal Boufflers refuſed to grant their requeſt, but the ladies in whom the fear of the cannons prevailed over every other, reſolved to confide in the king's generoſity, and came out on foot, attended only by ſome of their women, who carried their children. The king was greatly moved at this ſight, he ſent them the next day to Phillippeville, and from thence to Dinant. Madame de Maintenon received them as if they had been French, conſoled them with the ſofteſt compaſſion, and to relieve

their neceſſities, ſold all her jewels except one ring, which probably ſhe could not ſell.

Whoever has moſt reaſon to love his life, is obliged to expoſe it moſt. The king appeared in every place where there was the greateſt danger, he viſited the poſts and the trenches, and filled with a generous emulation that brave nobleſſe who have always placed their higheſt glory, in vanguiſhing or dying, before the eyes of their king. The whole army perceived that he expoſed himſelf incautiouſly to every danger, and trembled for the conſequence. A Gabion ſaved his life by breaking the force of a muſket-ball, which was aimed directly at him, and which by going a little a ſide, only made a contuſion in the arm of the count de Toulouſe. The king heard the whiſtling of the ball, and aſked whether ſomebody was not wounded. 'I 'think ſomething has touched me,' ſaid the young prince. The ſecretary of ſtate when he made out the patents for the government of Brittany, mentioned the count's having been wounded at his fathers ſide. 'Eraſe that, ſaid the king 'to him, it is but a trifle for my ſon.'

The garriſon withdrew into the cittadel, which was much more difficult to be taken, it held out five and twenty days, but

but was at length reduced, by the artillery of Vauban. This engineer did more, he took fort William by force, fort William the work of Coehorn, defended by Coehorn himſelf, who had declared that he would bury himſelf under its ruins. The duke on this occaſion behaved like a Condé. The prince was at the head of all. Luxembourg in vain offered the prince of Orange battle: the duke of Chartres to whom courage only was attributed, ſhewed a judgment almoſt equal to his courage; and the Mouſquetaries did their duty exactly.

The courtiers were weary of the ſlow operations of the ſiege. The ladies were ſent for from Dinant: a ſtranger would have taken the camp for an inchanted place. Hunting, dancing, wine, and play, filled the intervals of military operations. The king animated the ſoldiers by his ardor, and by his eaſy gaity enlivened his little court: he ſent refreſhments to the regiment of dauphine which had carried the fortreſs of Caſſote ſword in hand; and here follows an account of it by an officer belonging to the regiment.

'Madame de Maintenon accompanied by a great number of noblemen and ladies arrived, and ſaw us eat with as much appetite as we had ſhewn vigour in the aſſualt,

aſſault; ſhe viſited all our tents, and told us at parting, that ſhe intended to give us a collation the next day in the kings quarters. When we came, one of her domeſticks gave each of us a little billet, on which was wrote *to the abbey of Salſines.* This was a convent of ladies of diſtinction, about a quarter of a league from Namur. None of the noblemen or officers of the king's army were allowed to enter, but all the ladies of the court were there, and by a moſt agreeable reverſion of the firſt laws of cuſtom, they ſerved all the tables with the moſt gallant air imaginable. Thoſe who had been firſt informed that madame de Maintenon was to be preſent at this entertainment, placed two of our officers at the gate to give us notice of it as we arrived. We all went to kiſs her hand, which ſhe preſented to us with inimitable grace. The enſign of our company, who was about ſeventeen years of age, handſome, genteel, lively, and extremely witty, perceiving the abbeſs at the head of the nuns, whom curioſity had led to ſee ſo new a ſpectacle, addreſſed an elegant ſpeech to madame de Maintenon at the cloſe of which he intreated her to permit his companions and himſelf, to ſalute thoſe veiled ladies.

'Madame de Maintenon was a little embarraſſed at firſt by this requeſt, but recollecting

collecting herſelf immediately, ſhe replied, that ſhe had no right to command thoſe ladies. This was enough for the enſign, he addreſſed himſelf to the abbeſs with ſo graceful a freedom, that ſhe could not refuſe, and the nuns were all ſaluted by our officers. We had ſcarce begun to do honour to the delicate repaſt that was ſerved up to us, and to a liquor which we called the ratafee of Salſines, becauſe the nuns had preſented it to us, when the king entered the reflectory, attended by the dauphin. He was ſo well pleaſed with this ſpectacle at the firſt glance that he ſtopped at the door to view it at leiſure. Madame de Maintenon went to him, and gave him an account of the homage we had paid her, and the kiſs which the nuns had granted us. The king laughed exceſſively, and being deſirous to leave us at full liberty, he ſaid to us. 'I will 'take advantage of the time you ſit at 'table, where you do you rduty almoſt as 'well as in another place, to conduct the 'ladies home for you, whoſe preſence 'here may poſſibly be a reſtraint upon 'you. Adieu gentlemen, I leave you in 'the hands of your amiable hoſteſſes, 'your advantage is not leſs than mine.'

The next morning madame de Maintenon ſent one of her ſervants with a meſſage to me, requiring my attendance upon

upon her at ten o'clock: I waited on her accordingly. 'Your colonel, ſaid ſhe, to 'me, has ſpoke to me of you and your 'family, I would know from yourſelf 'who you are.' I told her my name, and that my parents were the marquis de Langalleric and Henrietta de Neſmond, of the province of Angoumois; and that I had the honour to be her kinſman, which was a ſpur to me in the road of glory, and a rein to keep me from ever wandering out of it. Two days afterwards ſhe ſent me a packet in which were four hundred Lewis d'ors, and theſe words. 'This preſent is to furniſh you with an 'equipage ſuitable to your rank, be wiſe, 'be prudent, and I will take care of 'your fortune'.

'Whether it was that my countenance pleaſed her, or that ſhe was ſtruck with my name, it is certain that I was honoured with her favour from the firſt moment ſhe ſaw me. She preſented me to the king, I obtained a company, and ſlept upon the roſes which ſhe cultivated for me' *&c.*

The marquis de Langallierie, from whoſe memoirs I have tranſcribed theſe little circumſtances, for the truth of which I will not pretend to anſwer, was great grand-ſon of Theodore Agrippa d'Aubigné. He did not fulfil the expecta-

tions

tions of his benefactreſs, who after having ſerved him with the utmoſt ardour of friendſhip, abandoned him entirely. He was obliged to quit the French ſervice, where he was a lieutenant general, and enter that of Auſtria, where he ſuffered many mortifications. It was he who formed the impious ſcheme of collecting together in the iſles of the Archipelago, that people whom the breath of God had ſcattered over the whole earth. His wife threw herſelf into the arms of the Landgrave of Heſſe, and he ended his days in a priſon, where he wrote thoſe memoirs ſo injurious to the reputation of his kinſwoman, and where theſe words may be found ſo abſurd in the mouth of the wiſe Catinat. *At court the very walls ſpeak, and madame de Maintenon liſtens to them.*

During the ſiege of Namur, madame de Maintenon ſuffered ſome little uneaſineſs from the princeſs of Harcourt, who was often rude, and ſometimes ſatirical and cenſorious. When the enemies of that lady endeavoured to irritate madame de Maintenon againſt her; ſhe replied, 'I love the princeſs of Harcourt becauſe 'ſhe has many good qualities, I pardon 'her, becauſe ſhe is raſh and obſtinate, 'and I ſerve her becauſe the duke of 'Brancas her father formerly ſerved me,

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'it is therefore a debt of gratitude which 'I am deſirous of diſcharging.'

The publick joy for the taking of Namur was interrupted by the loſs of the naval battle of the Hogue, where a hundred Engliſh veſſels beat fifty French, after a long and obſtinate conteſt. The king when Tourville appeared before him in great dejection, ſaid to him. 'I am 'very well ſatisfied with your behaviour, 'we have been beat, but we have gained 'glory. It has coſt us ſome veſſels, we 'will repair this loſs, and you will cer-'tainly have your revenge.'

Van Beuning ſpeaking of theſe two events added. 'We have cut the king of 'France's hair, but that will be grown 'again by the next year: the king of 'France has cut of our arm, which we 'can never recover.' However Namur was retaken, and the Ocean no more ſaw a French fleet.

CHAP-

CHAPTER XII.

The battles of Steenkirk, and of Nerwinde: the death of Luxembourg.

LEWIS returned immediately to Verſailles, his army and that of William, being in ſight of each other. This precipitate departure gave occaſion for many different conjectures; ſome ſaid, that he ſacrificed his glory to the fears of madame de Maintenon, others maintained that this diſhonourable retreat was owing to the ſuſpicions he entertained of his brother, whom in his abſence he had made lieutenant-general, and whoſe popularity had awakened his jealouſy. But madame de Maintenon was neither capable of giving him advice injurious to his reputation, nor the king of liſtening to the mean ſuggeſtion of envy. Thoſe who pretend to penetrate into the views and deſigns of princes, always aſcribe them to motives inconſiſtent with their character. The allies charged Lewis with fearing William, and flying from him, and the hugenots, who had taken refuge in foreign countries, endeavoured to ren-

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der his courage doubtful. Would you be believed? advance an abſurdity: we are aſſured by a hundred hiſtorians, that a man who made war during his whole life, had not even the firſt virtue of warriors. It was related by a certain author, that in a council where they were deliberating if they ſhould offer battle, a general officer perceiving the king turn pale at that word, proved in a long ſpeech, that they ought to avoid fighting, and was rewarded with a marſhal's ſtaff, as if he had gained the battle.

Theſe injurious reports even reached the king, and without doubt were partly the cauſe of that oſtentation of intrepidity ſo apparent in his conduct at the ſieges of Mons and Namur. 'My ſon, 'ſaid he, to the dauphin, a king's poſt is 'that, where there is moſt danger.'

Lewis had not the impetuous valour of an Alexander, but he had that calm and ſteady courage which made him ſuperiour to the danger which he diſtinctly ſaw, that valour which alone belongs to a king.

However, the king by not ending the campaign, ſuffered an opportunity to eſcape him, which would have compleated his glory. The duke de Luxembourg had

had the honour to fight again with the prince of orange, and to vanquiſh him in the battle of Steenkirk, the moſt bloody one that had been fought ſince that of Rocroy.

The duke of Luxembourg was unexpectedly attacked by the allied army. One of his brigades was put into diſorder, and the enemies had made themſelves maſter of an eminence at the head of his camp, and had taken poſſeſſion of the cannon which was placed there to prevent any acceſs to it. He is already almoſt vanquiſhed before he knows that he is betrayed. The whole army is loſt unleſs this poſt can be recovered, he attacks it three times, three times he is driven back, he puts himſelf at the head of the Brigade of guards, he flies from rank to rank, his braveſt officers blame the exceſs of his ardour, which expoſes him to imminent danger. Montmorency falls before his eyes, wounded by a muſket ball as he was placing himſelf before his father to cover him from a horrible diſcharge, he eagerly ſeeks William, who covered with duſt and blood, is every where in an inſtant, he brings back to the battle platoons, who now bluſhed that they had given way. Luxembourg had all that was moſt great and honourable in the French monarchy, fighting on his ſide

Bourbon,

Bourbon, Conti, Verdôme, the duke de Chartres, who being wounded, retired a moment till his ſurgeon bled him, and then ruſhed into the battle with ſword in hand, and with a horrible carnage he recovered the contended poſt, and forced William to fly.

This victory filled the court and city with exceſſive joy. This is the man, cried they, whom Louvois choſe rather to keep in the baſtile than to put at the head of our armies. When theſe firſt tranſports had ſubſided, the envious courtiers endevoured to leſſen the glory of Luxembourg, they exclaimed againſt his eaſy credulity for ſuffering himſelf to be impoſed upon by the letter of a treacherous ſpy. The king ſaid, 'What would 'he not have done if he had not been 'ſurpriſed.'

His majeſty went ſome days afterwards to Saint-Cyr, the ſuperiour congratulating him upon his ſucceſs; the king replied. 'You ought rather to make me a com-'pliment of condolance, for I have taken 'but one city. Your generals, Sire, 'ſaid ſhe, have acted by your orders. 'Ah reſumed the king, they are better 'ſoldiers than I am.'

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The ladies of Saint-Lewis merited this obliging attention in the king, they loved the ſtate, although they hated the world, and they ſtill unite the vitrues of good citizens and pious nuns. A book was publiſhed entitled *the lamentation of the ladies of Saint-Cyr for the retaking of Namur.* I have juſt read this work, it is an inſolent ſatire, in which there is nothing true but the title.

The king was extremely deſirous of beating the prince of Orange once at leaſt. He departed for Flanders, and madame de Maintenon attended him again in this campaign. But it was William's deſtiny to be defeated only by the duke of Luxembourg, and to be ſo every year. Lewis was taken ill at Quenoy, and returned haſtily to Verſailles. Luxembourg eagerly fought to fight, the prince of Orange avoided it. He had intrenched himſelf upon mount Saint-Andrew, the marſhal threatened Liege; William and and the elector of Bavaria drew near to defend it; Luxembourg now thought of nothing but attacking them. On this occaſion the prince of Conti's advice and the intrepidity of the duke de Chartres was of great ſervice to him, he carried the village of Nerwinde which coſt the lives of twenty thouſand men. He wrote

to the king upon a ſcrap of paper in theſe terms. 'Artaignan who ſaw 'the action, will give your majeſty an 'exact account of it. Your enemies 'have performed wonders; your troops 'have acted ſtill better: as for myſelf, 'Sire, I have no other merit, than in 'having executed your orders, you bid 'me attack a town, and give the ene-'mies battle, I have taken the town and 'I have gained the battle.' The prince of Orange in his rage and deſpair of this defeat, wrote thus to one of his friends. 'I believe I am never to vanquiſh this 'hump-back.' 'Hump-back, ſaid Lux-'embourg, when he heard of that ex-'preſſion, how ſhould he know it? he 'never ſaw my back.'

The death of Luxembourg put an end to this ſucceſs, a meſſage was ſent to the king to inform him that the duke's phyſicians had no hopes of his life. Madame de Maintenon ſet the whole community of Saint-Cyr to prayers, and Lewis with tears, ſaid to Fagon, 'Monſieur, I conjure you do all for him 'that you would do for me.'

Father Bourdalone attended him and received his laſt ſighs. 'I have not lived

'like

like him, ſaid the father, but I wiſh I 'may die as well.' Luxembourg tho' not pious, had always ſhewn great reverence for religion. No general ever had more amiable qualities. His camp was a ſeat of pleaſure and magnificence, he loved amuſements, but they never intruded upon his hours of buſineſs, or retarded a moment the operations of war; his judgment was clear, his courage cool but ſteady, he gave his orders with great readineſs and exactneſs. It was ſaid by thoſe who underſtood the military art, that he could judge of the enemies motions by a ſingle glance, but that he was not ſo capable of judging of their deſigns, that his mind being more employed in conſidering how he ſhould gain a battle, than in planing the operations of a campaign, he knew how to fight, but not how to vanquiſh.

Father de la Rue pronounced his funeral oration, and drew a horrid picture of the prince of Orange, which the king obliged him to ſuppreſs; thinking it ridiculous and mean to allow an enemy to be inſulted in the pulpit, againſt whom he had an army of an hundred thouſand men in the field. Lewis was not willing to treat as a tyrant and uſurper, a prince who was now king of a free people, and

whom he would be ſoon obliged to treat as a brother. Peace was drawing near, but the divines had kindled another kind of war in the kingdom which was not likely to end ſo ſoon.

The End of the TENTH BOOK.

BOOK

BOOK THE ELEVENTH.

Of Quietiſm.

MADAME de Maintenon had ſo great a ſhare in the troubles occaſioned by the ſpreading of this ſect, that the reader will doubtleſs not be ſurpriſed to find this affair treated at length in her memoirs. Here we ſhall ſee innocence oppreſſed; a cautious and vigilant king deceived; a phantom of hereſy combated with outrageous zeal; an ambaſſador who publickly diſobeys the orders of his maſter; a father of the church tranſported with indecent rage; an innovator obedient and reſigned; many contradictions will be found, but it is not for me to endeavour to make men conſiſtent with themſelves.

CHAPTER I.

Of Madame Guion.

JANE-Maria Bouviers de la Mothe was, born at Montargis; at eighteen years of age ſhe was married to the ſon of the celebrated Guion, who owed his immenſe fortune and his nobility to the noble undertaking of the canal of Briare. This lady from her earlieſt youth applied her thoughts to heavenly things, the livelineſs of her imagination, her tender and flexible mind, made her misfortunes and her piety her crime. Her growing inclination for *ſpirituality* was ſtrengthened by the counſels of her directors, and by the oppoſition of her huſband. Francis de la Combe, a monk, a native of Tonon in Savoy, a libertine in his youth, in his old age a devotee, and a myſtic, mortified and devout on his appearance, but vain, ſubtile and ambitious, acquired the direction of her conſcience, and reduced her erroneous opinions to a ſyſtem.

Madame Guion being left a widow at two and twenty years of age, with immenſe riches, and a mind wholly weaned from this ſublunary world, reſolved to labour

bour for the ſalvation of her neighbours. Father de la Combe perſuaded her that ſhe was equal to this great work, either becauſe he was in love with her, and would therefore prevail upon her to follow him, or that he really thought her qualified to preach virtue and piety to her ſex.

Madame Guion entered into the views of her director, not becauſe ſhe was ambitious of being at the head of a ſect, but only to glorify God *. The ſufferings of Molinos did not terrify her, ſhe did not believe there was any ſimilarity in their opinions, however her huſband had upon his death-bed ſaid to her; 'I am afraid 'the ſingularity of your notions will draw 'you into much trouble.'

No woman ever had qualities more proper to form a ſect: her perſon was full of grace, her countenance noble, yet ſweet; the moſt engaging ſoftneſs was in her eyes, her mouth was formed for perſuaſion; ſhe was eloquent with all the graces of ſimplicity, lively, gay, inſinuating, with all the enthuſiaſm of devotion; in a word, madame Guion was the moſt lovely heretic that had yet appeared; her piety did not hinder her from *diſplaying* a moſt beautiful *neck*, from an extreme at-

* The biſhop of Agen's manuſcripts. Page 384.

tention to dreſs, *from valuing herſelf upon a diſtinguiſhing elegance of manners, from dancing at a ball, with all the triumph of conſcious grace and beauty; from going to church, to be viewed by her lover, rather than to invoke her love* (that was the name ſhe gave Jeſus Chriſt) *from loving thoſe charms, which even in their decline, ſeemed to inſpire* new deſires, from recalling to her remembrance what *love* had ſaid to her, after ſhe had the ſmall-pox. *If I had deſired that thou ſhould'ſt be beautiful, I would have ſuffered thee to remain as thou wert: when thou would'ſt have made vows of chaſtity only for a time, and could'ſt not endure that any woman ſhould be thought beautiful near thee* *: from chooſing for the preceptor to her ſon, a young agreeable abbé, tender, polite, aſſiduous, and more employed in teaching Latin to the mother than the ſon †. She was inceſſantly perſecuted by her ſelfiſh relations, always languiſhing with illneſs, yet always charming, ſhe loved God, ſhe loved the world, and made both theſe paſſions agree.

* Life of madame Guion, written by herſelf, part the firſt.

† An account of quietiſm, by the abbé Phillippeaux, a very partial writer, but well informed.

Madame Guion poſſeſſed a great ſhare of wit, and even of that true kind which a celebrated writer * denies her, probably becauſe he has not read her works. See for inſtance her *ſhort way* and the third part of her life, from page 147 to page 252, the reader will there find her doctrine explained, with all the art of reaſoning and ſubtilty of wit. Her doctrine was not quietiſm, but approached very near it in the expreſſion, and notwithſtanding this apparent reſemblance, ſhe defended it againſt that imputation. How can it be imagined that ſhe wanted wit, who was capable of diſcovering that metaphiſical ſyſtem which Pope has expreſſed in ſuch beautiful poetry.

'God, ſays ſhe, governs mankind by 'an univerſal providence, for although 'in his diſpenſations there is a particular 'order which regards each individual, it 'is nevertheleſs ſo dependant upon the 'general order, that were he to ſwerve 'ever ſo little from it, he would break 'the connexion and throw all things into 'confuſion. The diſorders of the world, 'the miſeries of men, the overthrow of 'empires, are the neceſſary reſult of 'this general order, and that which to

* The age of Lewis the fourteenth the chapter upon quietiſm.

'appears irregular on account of our manner of conceiving things, is a truly admirable order according to divine wiſdom; ſo that particular diſorder, preſerves general order, and this is general order. God eſtabliſhes, he deſtroys what he has eſtabliſhed, and perpetuates things by this deſtruction.' *

Madame Guion full of that ardent zeal which we always have for our own opinions when we believe them new, or peculiar to ourſelves, went to propagate them in thoſe countries to which her *love* conducted her; her extreme liberality enforced them. She preached an abſolute ſelf renounciation, and that pure and diſintereſted love rejected by the wiſe, but by tender minds felt in its full force. She traverſed the countries, of Gex, Dauphiné, Piemont, where perſecuted by the inquiſition of Verceil, ſhe obeyed her *love*, who told her that the hour of martyrdom was not yet come, and flew to a place of greater ſafety. She had made proſelytes in the great Chartreuſe, but ſhe always deſpiſed the glory of forming a ſect. Her mind was weak, ſhe had no ambition, when her body was opened no part in it was found ſound except her heart, which hower was a little impaired,

* See her defence. Volume the third page 269.

and

and her brain which was entire, out like that of a child, only a little more humid. If all myſticks were to be opened, would they not be found like madame Guion?

To the weak and tender ſhe gave only the milk of her maxims, and her *ſhort way*, but when they were grown capable of receiving more ſolid nouriſhment, they ſought it, by lanching upon the impetuous waves of her *torrents*, for that was the title of one of her books, which were all printed with the approbation of ſome doctors of divinity, and all curious from the ſingularity of their ſtyle. She gained a great number of diſciples, her doctrine flattered pride, and indulged indolence, her proſelytes went on to perfection, through paths ſtrewed with flowers; the meer intention was in the ſight of God ſufficient. The eccleſiaſticks, thought they were diſpenſed from ſaying their breviary, the faithful from active piety, the women from the care of guarding againſt their vapours, old ſinners entered flying into the chamber of the ſpouſe. To love only, was neceſſary to perfection. Madame Guion laid down true principles, her proſelytes drew practical conſequences from them, which ſeemed juſt, but were in reality abominable.

Her mind became disordered by long fasting, she propheſied that all hell would riſe againſt her, that the woman ſhould be pregnant by the inward ſpirit and that the dragon ſhould ſoon place himſelf before her to devour her. At her return to Paris, the prophecy was accompliſhed, her enemies waited for her there.

CHAPTER II.

Harlai *de* Chanvalon.

THE Dioceſe of Paris was then governed by monſieur de Harlai, de Chanvalon, a prelate who might be ſaid to have glided into the church rather than to have entered it. Monſieur Vincent de Paule, who had been admitted into the council of conſcience, under Anne of Auſtria, had formerly excluded Harlai from the coadjuatorſhip of Rouen. Monſieur de Perefixe took an opportunity when Vincent was hindered by ſome indiſpoſition from coming to the council, to propoſe Harlai. Hence the hatred of that prelate againſt monſieur de Vincent, againſt his inſtitution, and againſt all who reſembled him.

Harlai, while archbiſhop of Rouen, filled his whole dioceſe with the ſcandal of his debaucheries. His looſe conduct procured him the archbiſhoprick of Paris. The king and madame de Monteſpan were afraid of a too rigid cenſor, they flattered themſelves that a paſtor immerſed in vice would not dare to reproach them with their guilty paſſion :* they were not mistaken. Harlai was ſilent and ſuffered all. The miſtreſs found in him an aſſiduous courtier, and the prince a convenient caſuiſt. He one day ſent for a painter to take the deſign of Conflans, with orders to draw all he ſhould ſee without being ſeen. The artiſt cauſed this plan to be ſhewn to the king. There my lord archbiſhop was ſeen in a cloſet placeing a noſegay in the boſom of the Sultana of the day. *Jan.* 1660.

A pleaſing form, great elegance of manners, the talent of ſpeaking well, and a prodigious memory, hid part of his faults. When he gave audience he would embrace the moſt diſagreeable monks with the ſame ardour as the moſt charming of his miſtreſſes. He would often enquire the name of a man whom a moment before he had almoſt ſtifled with kindneſs. He treated the affairs of the church with the ſame levity, as an amour,

* Memoirs of the biſhop of Agen.

and his eloquence was as perſuaſive in the aſſembly of the clergy, as powerful at the toilet of a lady.

The king inſenſibly diſtruſted the deluſion of his tongue, and the eccleſiaſticks, the ſincerity of his kindneſs. Lewis looked upon the ſparkling ſallies of his imagination, as ſnares laid for his prudence, and the prieſts regarded his promiſes as denials, and his threats as meer formalities. The people ſung ballads upon their archbiſhop. There was no church diſcipline in his dioceſe. Tenets were maintained with great rigour, morals were abandoned wholly to providence. He no longer ſought to acquire the praiſes of his king, and was only ſolicitous to guard againſt his reproofs. He uſed his utmoſt endeavours to ſtifle thoſe reports which might inform him of his ſimonies, or his libertiniſm. He obtained a pardon for a ſcandalous crime, by entring into all the deſigns of the court, in prejudice to the order, of which he was the head.

The comptroller general was always ſure of finding in the firſt eccleſiaſtick in the kingdom a ready promoter of the free gift, one who was greatly concerned for the neceſſities of the ſtate, and laviſh of the revenues of the church. The prelates

lates ardour to ſerve the king on theſe occaſions was ſo exceſſive, that the miniſter was obliged to reſtrain it. Hence theſe immenſe debts to which the clergy are ſubjected, hence thoſe loans, which by making it more eaſy to levy taxes, make the taxes more frequent.

In proportion as Lewis grew weary of women, Harlai ſaw his intereſt with him decreaſe. The king repented his having given him the firſt dignity of the church, he deprived him of the liſt of benefices, he no longer ſpoke to him with his wonted kindneſs, he reproved him ſeverely for his ſcandalous life, and his antichamber became a deſart.

CHAPTER III.

Madame Guion *impriſoned and ſet at liberty.*

AS ſoon as madame Guion arrived at Paris, the archbiſhop obtained an order from the king, to confine her in the convent of the viſitation in the ſtreet Saint-Anthony; ſhe was accuſed of having an intrigue with father de la Combe, her faithful friend, who was put into the baſtile: it was reported that this monk had 1687.

had taken advantage of his penitents frenzy, to violate her chaſtity. She produced Catos, her woman, who never quitted her a moment, to witneſs to her honour. She was anſwered that Catos had ſhared her pleaſures. The archbiſhop ſent Cheron his official to examine her, a man who was ſo infamous for the irregularity of his life, that the prioreſs was in doubt whether ſhe ſhould admit him into the convent.

Madame Guion edified the nuns by her piety, made proſelytes of ſome, and raiſed compaſſion in all; in the world ſhe had many partizans, and many protectors in the court. However madame de la Maiſon-fort, her couſin, was the only perſon who ventured to defend her openly. This lady was deſcended from an ancient family in the province of Berry, ſhe had been cannoneſs of Pouſſay, twelve years, an abbey into which the nobility alone were admitted; ſhe had wit, beauty, a lively imagination, great candor, an infinite ſweetneſs in her manners, being perſecuted by an unjuſt mother-in-law, the abbé Gobelin introduced her to madame de Maintenon, who admitted her into Saint-Cyr, to regulate the education of the young ladies; madame de la Maiſon-fort acquitted herſelf of this taſk ſo well as to merit the eſteem and confidence of the foundreſs, but her mind had taken

taken too gay a turn to permit her to make the abſolute vows, and ſhe was too haughty to pay obedience to a woman. She reliſhed madame Guions doctrine, yet could not reſolve to follow her advice and renounce the world. Madame Guion often ſaid to her, 'to govern you 'couſin a ſquare cap is neceſſary.'

Madame de la Maiſon-fort at the intreaty of monſieur Jaſſeau, a prieſt of the miſſion, repreſented to madame de Maintenon that her kinſwoman was only guilty of an exceſs of love for God. That all the calumnies which were ſpread againſt her, were invented by her relalations, who coveted her eſtate; that the archbiſhop of Paris knew her innocence, but was reſolved to perſecute her till ſhe conſented to the marriage of her daughter with the Marqius de Chanvalon.

Madame de Maintenon mentioned the affair to the king, whom ſhe found greatly prejudiced againſt madame Guion, by father de la Chaiſe. That jeſuit perhaps thought it his duty to comfort the archbiſhop for the dimunition of his power by ſoothing his paſſions; he diſpoſed of all benefices as he pleaſed, but he acted with ſo much prudence, that Harlai thought himſelf the abſolute maſter of de la Chaiſe.

Madame

Madame de Maintenon was herſelf prejudiced againſt the woman ſhe protected, by father de la Motthe, the brother-in-law of madame Guion; this artful monk counterfeited the hand writing of Father de la Combe, and put his name to all the blaſphemies and wild extravagancies of Molinos.

Madame de Miramion was deſirous of judging herſelf whither madame Guion was as criminal or as mad as ſhe was ſaid to be; ſhe went to the convent where ſhe was confined, ſhe interrogated the prioreſs, and hearing nothing but praiſes of the priſoner, ſhe made a favourable report to madame de Maintenon, who pleaſed at being undeceived, and grieved that ſhe had ſuffered herſelf to be prejudiced, promiſed to ſpeak again to the king.

Madame de la Maiſon-fort engaged the dutcheſſes de Charoſt, Chevreuſe, Beuvilliers, Mortemar, the purity of whoſe faith was unſuſpected, to ſolicit for her kinſwoman. How ridiculous, ſaid they, is it in monſieur the archbiſhop, who it is well known has no averſion to women, to ſeek the ruin of one who loves nothing but God. Let this auſtere man firſt endeavour to ſuppreſs the licentiouſneſs of manners which now prevails, and then

then we will allow him to exert his zeal againſt what he calls hereſy.

The king importuned by Madame de Maintenon, and by the murmurs of the court but half informed of the truth, deſired that a petition might be preſented to him, and upon reading of it, ordered that the priſoner ſhould be releaſed. The archbiſhop, durſt not complain, but was willing to ſave his honour at leaſt.

Before he would ſet madame Guion at liberty, he endeavoured to make her ſign a writing which was to prove that he was not miſtaken, and that ſhe was in reality a heretick. She refuſed to ſign this paper, and maintained that there were no hereſies in her books, ſince ſhe had no intention to introduce any.

Madame de Maintenon ſuffering the prelate to ſatisfy his vanity, with theſe forms, cauſed madame de Guion to be told that it was her will, ſhe ſhould ſign the paper, that ſhe would inform the king of the violence that was uſed to her, and that at preſent it was of the utmoſt importance to her to get out of the hands of this prince of prieſts.

Madame Guion obeyed her protectreſs and was releaſed from her confinement.

Madame

Madame de Maintenon had inſiſted upon her ſigning the paper immediately, becauſe ſhe thought it was of no importance to a woman, whether ſhe was deceived or not in matters of religion, and becauſe ſhe knew that her enemies would again endeavour to prejudice the king, from whom they had already procured an order for transferring madame Guion to a priſon two hundred leagues diſtant from Paris. So eaſy it is for men in power to deceive the prince, and to exerciſe the moſt publick tyranny under his name, when all acceſs to juſtice is denied by the abuſe of arbitary authority.

The dutcheſſes de Chevreuſe and Beauvelliers, the princeſs d'Harcourt, the marchioneſs de Montchevreuil and madame de Miramion congratuled madame Guion upon her recovered liberty, and invited her to Verſailles. Monſieur de Charôt lent her his apartments there; the duke de Bethune his father who had been involved in the diſgrace of Fouquet whoſe ſiſter he had married, when baniſhed to Montargis, had been received by madame Guion's father into his houſe, and transmitted to his children the gratitude he owed a family who had ſuccoured him in his diſtreſs. Madame Guion's doctrine was reliſhed at court, and in a place where fortune is only adored, there were found

found perhaps for the firſt time, hearts which worſhipped God in ſpirit and in truth.

Madame de Maintenon had a curioſity to ſee and to converſe with ſo extraordinary a perſon; the dutcheſſes were eager to accompany madame Guion in this viſit, her beauty, her misfortunes, that powerful perſuaſion in her looks and her words, her ſweetneſs, her patience, and that talent ſo peculiar to herſelf of ſpeaking of God in a manner wholly ſublime, all joined to convince madame de Maintenon that ſhe had never made a better uſe of her power.

She expreſſed the tendereſt affection for her, her eſteem and her confidence in her encreaſed every day. The viſits of the new ſaint were frequent, no longer rapid hours, but whole days were ſpent with her, the oftener ſhe ſaw her, the more ſhe was charmed; was ſhe oppreſſed with uneaſineſs, or her ſpirits exhauſted with fatigue, madame Guion was ſent for; and her converſation all celeſtial and ſublime was alike fitted to pleaſe, and to conſole her.

Madame de Miramion received her into her community in defiance of the archbiſhop. Madame Guion came out ſome-

ſometimes to viſit madame de Charôt at Benne, from whence ſhe went to Saint-Cyr, where ſhe ſtaid ſeveral days, and diſtributed her books among the community. The ladies of Saint-Lewis loved her thro' the force of example and inclination: and while madame de Maintenon bleſt heaven for the happy ſucceſs of her cares, error inſinuated itſelf into Saint-Cyr, under the maſk of piety.

CHAPTER IV.

The abbé Fenelon.

THE number of this fair viſionary's diſciples encreaſed every day, and ſhe very ſoon acquired one who was of more value than all the others. 'One 'day ſhe heard him named, and her 'whole ſoul was filled with extreme ten-'derneſs. She fancied that *love* united him 'intimately to her, and ſhe ſeemed to have 'ſpiritually adopted him. I ſaw him, ſays 'ſhe, * the next day, I inwardly felt that 'he did not like me, and I was ſenſible 'of a ſweet violence which made me 'wiſh to ſhed my heart into his, but I 'found his heart did not underſtand me,

* Life of madame Guion part the third, page 102.

and

'and God only knows what anguiſh I 'ſuffered that night. I ſaw him again, 'the next day, we continued ſilent for 'ſome moments, the cloud diſſipated a 'little, but he was ſtill far from what I 'wiſhed; eight whole days I ſuffered tor-'ments inexpreſſible, and then I found 'myſelf united to him without any ob-'ſtacles. Our union has ever ſince been 'growing more perfect, more pure, more 'ardent, more ineffable, my ſoul ſeems 'to have a perfect agreement with his. 'Oh my ſon! my heart is bound to the 'heart of Jonathan, I ſhould die if there 'ſhould ever be the leaſt difference be-'tween thee and me, between God and 'us. Oh my ſon!' How well calculated were theſe expreſſions to touch the tender and virtuous heart of the author of Telemachus!

The abbé Fenelon was born in Périgord, of noble parents, he was brought up by the biſhop of Sarlat, his uncle: in his youth he applied himſelf more to the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, than the fathers; he was ſucceſsfully employed in the converſion of proteſtants, and was made ſuperiour of the new catholicks, but accuſed of janſeniſm, on account of his connexions with Laval biſhop of Rochelle, and Barillon biſhop of Luçon: he was twice named to a biſhoprick by the king, and twice

twice rejected by the confeſſor, under pretence that he was a friend to Port-royal. Fenelon at length removed all the ſuſpicions that were entertained againſt him, his ſermons laid the foundation of his fame, and the chriſtian death of the old duke of Mortemar, whom he had prepared for that dreadful paſſage, compleated it.

The king had appointed the duke de Beauvillieres governor to the duke of Burgundy, but the poſt of preceptor to the young prince was ſtill vacant, and greatly ſolicited; the king left the choice of a proper perſon for this truſt to the governor of his grandſon, who immediately fixed upon the abbé Fenelon, whom he had been long acquainted with. However it was neceſſary that he ſhould entirely clear him from the imputation of janſeniſm; he had recourſe to madame de Maintenon, and in drawing the character of the abbé Fenelon, placed his virtues and abilities in the ſtrongeſt light.

Madame de Maintenon conſulted ſeparately the abbé Tronſon, ſuperiour of Saint-Sulpice, who extoled Fenelon's piety and deplored his misfortunes; Hebert curate of Verſailles, who ſaid, he would anſwer for his ſubmiſſion to the church; father Valois, who aſſured her, that Fenelon

lon was as much a jeſuit as himſelf; Boſſuet, who declared, that in the clergy of the ſecond order, he knew no one that equaled him. Madame de Maintenon told the king, that it would be happy for the duke of Burgundy to be educated by a man, whom ſo many perſons of characters ſo oppoſite, agreed in praiſing. Fenelon was appointed preceptor to the young prince, and the choice was ſo greatly applauded, that the academy of Angers propoſed him for the ſubject of the prize verſes which were compoſed every year.

Fenelon was at once the favourite, and the Saint of the court, his converſation was eagerly coveted by all, but he gave it only to a few ſelect and uſeful friends; he reconciled all the eaſy gaiety and inſinuating politeneſs ſo neceſſary in the converſation of ladies, with all the modeſty becoming his function. With the duke of Burgundy his pupil, he was plain, eaſy, and inſtructive; with Boſſuet ſublime; with the courtiers, gay, lively, ſparkling: his manners were irreſiſtably pleaſing, he had great ſtrength of imagination, the moſt perſuaſive eloquence, a ſtyle full of grace and vigour, he felt and inculcated the love of God, merely for the ſake of God alone, unbiaſed by hope, uninfluenced by fear. The fire in his eyes denoted the moſt

imperious paſſions, and his conduct the moſt amazing conqueſt of them. * Such was the proſelite whom madame Guion placed at the head of quietiſm.

Never was there any hereſy more agreeably inſinuated, and the ſame cauſe by haſtening its progreſs, haſtened its ruin likewiſe. Theſe new hereticks were more feared, than condemned; in a hipocritical court they were thought too ſincere, and too amiable in a court that was no longer ſo.

The abbé Fenelon did not yield at firſt, he made objections; madame Guion anſwered them. 'My ſon, ſaid ſhe, to him, 'are you ſatisfied, does the doctrine of

* The abbé Philippeaux, draws a very different picture of him. This unjuſt writer repreſents him as ambitious, artful, inconſtant and malicious. It was ambition according to him, which induced him to undertake the converſion of the huguenots; to be zealous in the performance of good works, to endeavour to regain the friendſhip of the biſhop of Meaux, to hold pious conferences at Saint-Cyr and Verſailles: it was artifice to advice madame de la Maiſon-fort to obey. He ſees nothing in his letters, his maxims and his whole conduct, but ſubtilty and deceit, he finds ſomething ſhocking in his countenance, and wildneſs in his eyes, although all who have ſeen the archbiſhop of Cambray acknowledge that he had great ſweetneſs in his looks, and gracefulneſs in his perſon.

'prayer

'prayer enter into your head?' 'Yes, 'madam, replied the abbé, and even by 'every door.'

Such was the aſcendant this woman had over the minds of all who converſed with her, that the moſt learned divines, ſuch as Nicole, Boſſuet, Boileau, Gaillard, although greatly prejudiced againſt her, and ſtill more againſt her *ſhort way*, ſaw her, heard her, and were undeceived. When they quitted her they reſumed their former ſentiments, which they could only hold by ſeeing her no more, her beauty doubtleſs had a great ſhare in the glory of the ſeduction.

Fenelon delivered himſelf entirely up to the ſtudy of myſtical books, his imagination was enflamed, in madame Guion he ſaw only a ſoul burning with divine love, full of ſimplicity and truth, whoſe very errors were reſpectable, ſince they had their ſource from the moſt holy and moſt ſublime principles, he found himſelf in her, he found his own candor, his piety, his diſintereſtedneſs, ſhe was perſecuted, and Fenelon had the tendereſt ſenſibility for the unhappy; a virtue ſo uſeleſs in the world, ſo fatal in a court.

He diſliked the archbiſhop of Paris, and he declared his ſentiments very freely, upon the voluptuouſneſs of his life, his deceitful kindneſs, and his paſſion for power. 'What is the archbiſhop of Pa-'ris doing? ſaid the courtiers one day.' 'He is giving diſpenſations,' anſwered Fenelon.

End of the third VOLUME.

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